Meralco 'hoodwinking' public on rate hike—Bayan

STORY ON PAGE A2

Chinoy kidnapped

CHINESE-FILIPINO businessman Albert Yam was abducted at about 8 last night from the Cainta (Rizal) Cockpit stadium that he manages.

Eyewitnesses said an undetermined number of Armalite-wielding men ordered Yam, who is in his 40s, into their vehicle at gunpoint.

Yam's family reportedly owns an international printing business. No other details were available, nor was it known if a ransom demand was made by the

CHINOY/A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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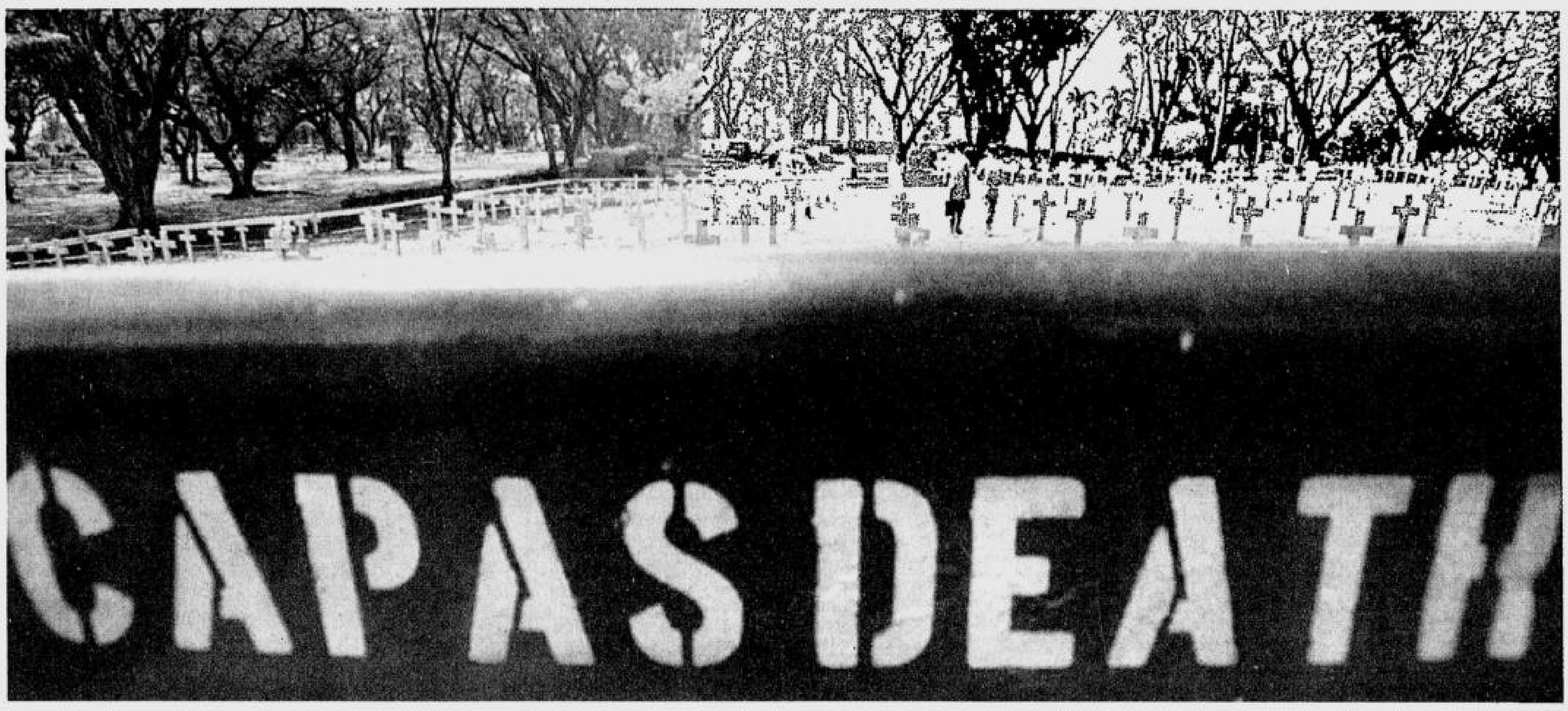
No txt 4 a coz

By Tonette Orejas
PDI C. Luzon Desk

MALAYO ANG MARA-
RATING NG PISO KO
PARA SA EDUKASYON!

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Starting next school year, two poor pupils—Abigail Dychitan and Alice Dimabuyu—will be assured of their daily

NO/A19



JOAN BONDOC

DAY OF VALOR

Memories of the Great War will be on the minds of many people tomorrow as the nation marks "Araw ng Kagitingan" or the 60th anniversary of the Fall of Bataan. The defeat preceded the infamous Death March from Mariveles, Bataan, to Capas, Tarlac. Some boys born too late stroll among the crosses of the country's war heroes at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

Anti-Israel outrage rises

US urged to intervene in crisis

PARIS—Tens of thousands of activists marched through Paris and Rome in protests demanding that Israel stop its offensive in the West Bank and expressing solidarity with the Palestinians.

Around the United States, hundreds of people also protested, calling Israel's offensive in the West Bank tantamount to the savagery of Nazi Germany and demanding that Washington intervene in the escalating crisis.

In Paris, more than 20,000 people marched Saturday (Sunday in Manila) to the Placé de la Bastille, where hundreds of police stood by. Some protesters carried shredded American flags and shouted slogans against Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

"Sharon Assassin" and "Arabs, Jews together against Sharon," they chanted in the protest organized by dozens of pro-Palestinian, anti-racist and communist groups.

In Rome, about 20,000 protesters marched through downtown, ending up at a rally in Piazza del Popolo, where the crowd swelled to about 50,000 people.

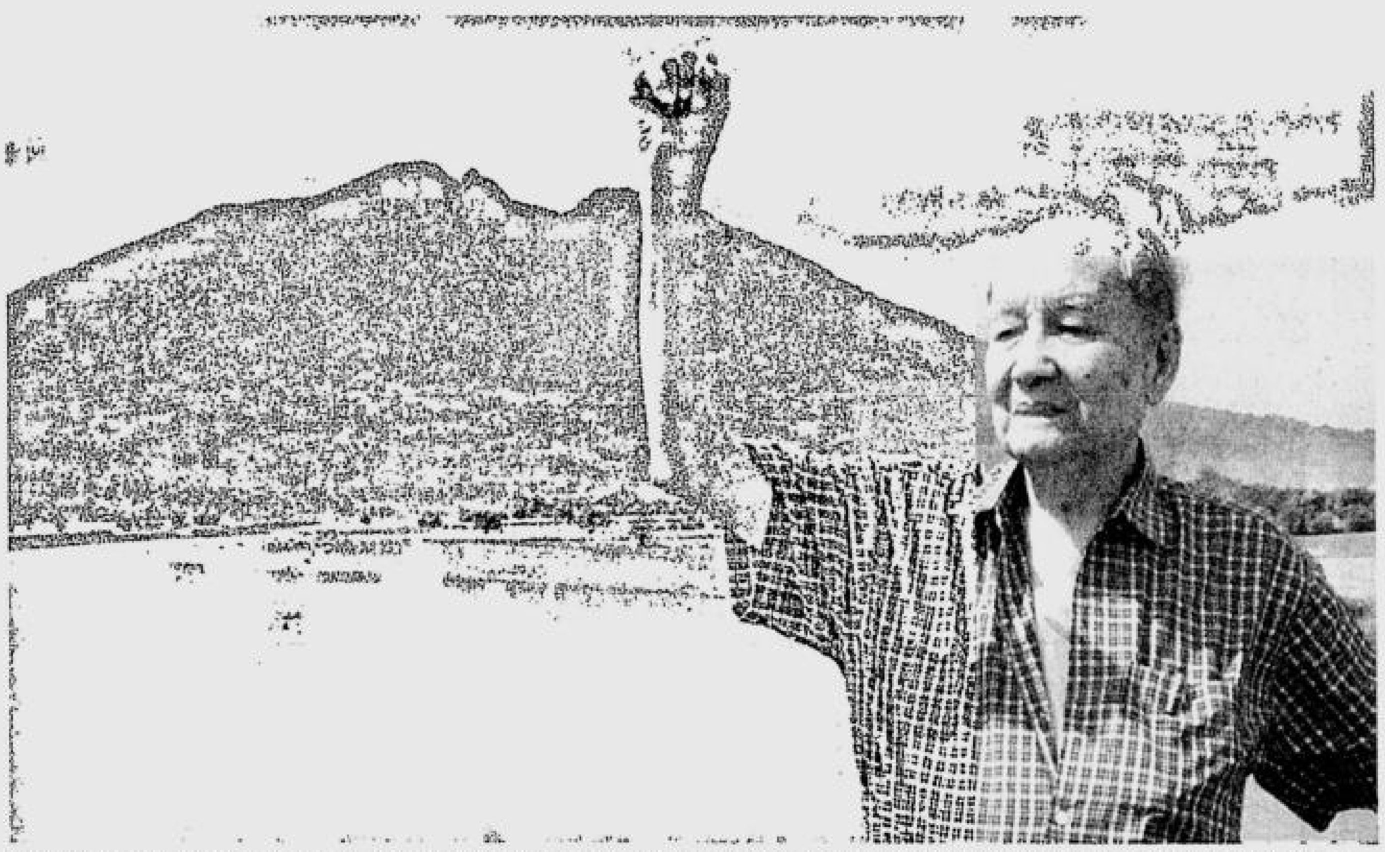
Other pro-Palestinian marches took place in smaller French and Italian cities.

A protest in Bern, Switzerland, drew about 9,000 people.

In Sydney, Australia, some 5,000 activists marched, shouting "Free Palestine" and waving flags and placards, to the Israeli and US consulates.

In New York, hundreds of people marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to

ANTI-ISRAEL/A19



HUK Supremo Luis Taruc remains steadfast to the cause of the "unfinished revolution" as he raises a clenched fist against the backdrop of Mt. Arayat, which was once his mountain stronghold.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Huks: Victims of injustice, history

By Jerry Esplanada

(First of two parts)

THE HUK VETS
An **I Team** *Report*

"*BAWAL ang mamatay* (Nobody is allowed to die)."

This is Luis M. Taruc's punch line every time he speaks before gatherings of surviving members of the Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon (Hukbalahap), now called the Hukbalahap Veterans Association Inc. or Hukvets.

The former Huk supremo, described by Encyclopedia Britannica as "hero of the Philippine anti-Japanese resistance" during World War II, said it was his "way of squeezing chuckles, if not laughs, from fellow Huks, men and women, who like me are in the twilight years."

On March 23, the Hukvets' chair emeritus recited his favorite line again before hundreds of World War II "heroes" who gave the old man a thunderous applause during the 60th anniversary rites of the guerrilla organization at the National Food Authority complex in Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija.

But Taruc, who will turn 89 next June, said the plight of the veterans was no joking matter. "Their case is one of plain and simple injustice. Actually, I'm trying to tell them that in their quest for belated justice, which by the way, continues to draw us together, they should never give up. They should never lose hope even if they're already in the autumn of their days."

Taruc has embarked on a fervid campaign for the mass recognition of more than 15,000 Huks by the government, which he calls the Hukbalahap's "unfinished revolution."

Of the 30,000-plus Huk guerrillas,

HUKS/A6

GMA awaiting 'consensus' on Cha-cha

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may withdraw her opposition to moves in Congress to amend the 1987 Constitution if there is a "real consensus" on Charter change, Press Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday said.

"Right now she doesn't support it but she could, depending on the results of the consultations, on what will come out," Tiglao said in a teleconference call with Malacañang reporters.

Tiglao was apparently referring to the plan by congressmen to hold consultations in their respective districts to gauge the people's pulse and determine what revisions to be made.

He said any move to amend the Charter "requires a sense of national consensus, a consensus among all political leaders."

"If there is a move, that's when she will decide whether to support it," the press secretary said.

But Ms Macapagal is not about to interfere in congressional initiatives to amend the Constitution, according to Tiglao.

GMA/A7

Arlyn airs appeal to media colleagues

By Fe Zamora
Inq7.net

DE LA CRUZ: If I survive this, hear me out . . .

JOURNALIST Arlyn de la Cruz, who has been held hostage by a group of armed men in Sulu for more than two months now, wrote late last month an "open letter" addressed to media colleagues.

The letter was mailed to a university professor in Manila and was forwarded to the Inq7.net and the INQUIRER.

De la Cruz, who got the first video footage of the Sipadan hostages in May 2000 and of American couple Martin and Gracia Burnham in November last year,

ARLYN/A19

Regime consolidation primary factor in senior AFP promotions

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE RETIREMENT of Lt. Gen. Jaime de los Santos as Army commander on April 2 and the impending retirement of Gen. Diomedio Villanueva as Armed Forces chief of staff on May 20 have fueled rumors of military unrest over succession to the top military command.

The speculation stems from the perception that President Macapagal-Arroyo is considering the appointment of Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, current head of the strategic Southern Command, as the next chief of staff. If Cimatu (Philippine Military Academy Class 1970), who is due to retire on July 4, will be chosen, this will require an extension of his tour of duty for three more years, going beyond the end of Ms Macapagal's transitional presidency in 2004.

This perception of Cimatu's extension is the basis of a warning by Gen-

REGIME/A19

Sleeping, dreaming— and dying

By Massie K. Santos
Contributor

"TO SLEEP, perchance to dream . . . and wake again."

With apologies to the Bard, we reworked his immortal line since sleeping and dying have been so much on the minds of many these days.

In one Halloween episode of "The Simpsons," groundskeeper Willy avenges his death by entering the schoolchildren's dreams and killing them in their sleep, thus preventing them from waking up and ending their nightmares.

In "The Matrix," Keanu Reeves' character is warned that when plugged in, the mind perceives all events in the Matrix as real and thus the body will

SLEEPING/A7

Second FRONT PAGE

MALAKING INCREASE PA RIN PALA!

Meralco 'hoodwinking' public–Bayan

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE MANILA Electric Co. was "hoodwinking" the public when it offered to reduce the rate increase it was asking for at the Energy Regulatory Commission hearing on April 2, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Bayan Muna party said.

Based on the "April 2 revised rates" proposal of Meralco, the average increase in the basic charge for residents consuming 1,000 kwh and below would actually be 133.6 percent, said Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr.

"Simply put, the increases would still be exorbitant, with the middle class now shouldering part of the burden," Reyes said.

Worse, the poorest consumers—those consuming 50 kwh and below—would be paying a basic rate higher than those consuming between 51 to 1,000 kwh, he added.

Bayan and Bayan Muna, the biggest opponents of Meralco on the rate hike issue, released their projections on the actual increases in the basic charge for residential customers under Meralco's revised rate proposal, as follows:

- For consumers who used up 50 kwh in March, the basic charge would increase by a whopping 170 percent, from the current P87 to the "April 2 revised" unbundled rate of P235.25.
- For those who consumed 100 kwh, the basic charge would increase by 143 percent, from the current P257 to the revised unbundled rate of P624.50.
- For 200 kwh consumption, the basic charge would increase from the current P597 to the revised unbundled rate of P1,367.
- For 300 kwh, the basic charge would still increase by 125 percent from the current P937 to the revised unbundled rate of P2,109.60.
- For 500 kwh, the basic charge would now increase by 110 percent from the current P1,764 to the revised unbundled rate of P3,712.50.
- For 1,000 kwh, the basic charge would now increase by 125 percent from the current P3,317 to the revised unbundled rate of P7,460.

Mike Ac-ac, Bayan Muna's legislative researcher, said Meralco and Bayan Muna had different conceptions of what constitutes the "current basic rate."

"Although we use the same data, we have different methods," he said.

Militant groups do not consider the controversial purchased power adjustment (PPA) and the currency exchange rate adjustment (Cera) as legitimate items for inclusion in the current basic charge.

The PPA pertains to the cost of the electricity that Meralco buys from the National Power Corp. while Cera represents the amount that Meralco is allowed to pass on to consumers as a result of the peso's weakening.

The PPA as of March stood at P3.22/kwh and the Cera at P0.21/kwh, while the basic charge was officially pegged at P3.40/kwh.

In its proposed increase, Meralco incorporated both the PPA and Cera into the basic charge.

Bayan Muna said it considers Meralco's incorporation of these charges to the basic charge "as separate increases in themselves."

Thus, it claims that Meralco is asking for a 116-percent rate increase while the power utility says it is only asking for 8.1 percent.

"Should they insist on challenging our new computations, we are up to the challenge," Ac-ac said.

"Meralco can use its technical staff aided by its P500-million mainframe computers against our ragtag research team of laymen aided only by a clear conscience and a P50 Aurora calculator," he said.

Ac-ac noted that the mainframe computers, reportedly acquired by Meralco in 1999 for P500 million, had been questioned in past hearings by the Solicitor General for being overpriced.

The computers were among the items to be questioned by militant groups in Meralco's listing of its assets base.

Meralco's profitability on which the rate of its utility charges is based is in turn based on the size of its assets. If the assets are inflated, it would appear that their profits are small, hence it can ask government for a higher rate increase.

Lawyer Rachel Pastores of the Public Interest Law Center (PILC) warned that "Meralco can use the loopholes of the law and past ERB rulings to justify the legality of the PPA and Cera."

"But it is another story whether they can convince ordinary consumers, the biggest interest group in this case, to accept these questionable charges," she said.

The PILC will stand as legal counsel for Bayan, Bayan Muna and several other people's organizations in opposing Meralco's unbundling application.

GMA wants review of 40 power contracts rushed

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo wants the review of at least 40 build-operate-transfer (BOT) contracts awarded to independent power producers (IPPs) completed "as soon as possible," Press Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

Tiglao's statement came amid criticism the inter-agency committee created to evaluate contracts believed to be onerous to the government has been sleeping on the job, resulting in excessive electricity rates to consumers.

The committee is composed of Cabinet Secretaries Jose Isidro Camacho, Hernando Perez and Dante Canlas and was created on July 18, 2001.

Tiglao said the overpriced contracts were "one major factor" for the country's high power rates, "but we still have to deal with that carefully."

He stressed the government could not just revoke the contracts found to be onerous as this would put into question the "integrity of contracts" in the country.

Tiglao said that even if the contracts are determined to be overpriced, the government could only try to "convince" the IPPs to reduce the price of the power they sell to the National Power Corp.

The high pass-on rates of these IPPs is being blamed for the high cost of electricity being borne by consumers.

The review of these contracts was mandated under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

"It's the intricacy of the contracts," Tiglao said to explain the reason for the slow review. "It takes time. We don't want to rush it."

Tiglao said President Macapagal was aware that the high cost of power has put the country at a "competitive disadvantage" in attracting foreign investors.

On top of this problem is the recent petition of the Manila Electric Co. to raise its rates in Metro Manila and nearby provinces. Meralco is the country's largest power distributor and it buys most of its electricity from Napocor and independent producers.

MACAPAGAL: Palace says overpriced contracts "one major factor" for high power rates.

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Kin of 16 dead OFWs to get at least ₱1M each

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE FAMILIES of the 16 overseas Filipino workers who were killed in an accident in Dubai two weeks ago will get at least $20,000, or around P1 million each, as part of the compensation package being prepared by the management of the Dubai dry docks.

Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief Wilhelm Soriano said the United Arab Emirates government has told the Philippine labor office in Dubai that it would indemnify the victims with an amount equivalent to two years' salary, separation pay, unfinished contract and accident insurance.

The P1 million coming to the victims' families does not include of the P10,000 assistance given by President Macapagal-Arroyo to each family and the scholarship and insurance benefits to come from the Owwa.

"The compensation is definite and very soon," said Soriano who could not say for sure what the exact amount was.

"But it's at least $20,000 for each family, it will not go below that amount," he said.

Soriano said the compensation package could even be bigger as the Dubai public safety department was still investigating the March 27 accident.

At least 30 people, most of them Filipinos, were killed when gate 2 of the Dubai dry docks, the largest ship repair facility in the Middle East, ruptured and flooded the docks.

Many other OFWs were injured and are still undergoing treatment with the help of the Philippine Embassy in Dubai, the labor department said.

The department reported that 1,697 Filipinos, 1,567 of whom enjoy regular workers status, were employed at the Dubai dry docks at the time of the accident.

The OFWs who were killed are also entitled to benefits from the firms that employed them, Soriano said.

The remains of Vittorio Gustillo, Henry Sumaga, Cecilio Silang, Marcelino Sumagang, Rolando Romero, Jose Santos, Arturo Rodriguez Jr., Joseph Cayaban, Sofio Boseo and Emando Canlas were repatriated on April 3.

The second and last batch, which arrived the next day, included Jim Lucero, Ferdinand Velasco, Florante Mercado, Arthur Pullido, Henry Sanchez and Jose Lizo Sr.

The Owwa will assist in the burial of all 16 OFWs.

Soriano said the families of the OFWs who died have been asked to open accounts with a bank of their choice and forward their account numbers to the Dubai dry docks management which would then deposit the money for the beneficiaries.

Soriano said the OFWs may even be entitled to more rights and benefits when the investigation into the accident is completed.

Assassin kills girl, injures ex-cop in Calapan church

A GUNMAN killed an 11-year-old girl and wounded a retired policeman when he opened fire inside a church in Calapan City during Sunday Mass, police said yesterday.

The assailant was trying to kill the retired policeman due to a personal dispute, police officer Benjamin Gutierrez said.

The bullet ripped through part of the policeman's face and struck the girl, who later died in a hospital.

No one else was injured in the incident that sent churchgoers into panic.

More than 500 churchgoers were in Sto. Niño Cathedral in Calapan City in Oriental Mindoro at the time of the shooting, officials said.

In Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro, communist guerrillas ambushed a group of government forest rangers and soldiers, wounding one of the rangers, the military said yesterday.

The New People's Army attacked the team near the town on Friday, wounding one of the environment department workers, a military report said.

The team had gone to the area with military escorts to confiscate illegally cut logs, it added. No rebel casualties were reported. *AP, AFP*

Military-NPA clashes escalate in Davao

DAVAO CITY—Seven Army troopers and 11 communist rebels were killed in separate encounters since Thursday in the provinces of Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley and in this city.

Brig. Gen. Felipe Beroya, chief of the Army's 701st Brigade based in Mawab, Compostela Valley, said the encounters with the New People's Army rebels, which started Thursday night, continue to escalate in these areas.

Beroya told the INQUIRER that seven soldiers were killed while 12 others were wounded during the encounters. Another soldier was reported missing.

Beroya said the NPA "traditionally unleashes" violence before and after its founding anniversary on March 29.

The first encounter erupted on Thursday in Boston, Davao Oriental, where NPA rebels ambushed government soldiers. Seven soldiers were killed in that ambush. The military claimed that the soldiers killed 10 NPA rebels in the ensuing gunbattle.

Another clash happened in Monkayo, Compostela Valley, on Thursday.

On Saturday night, an NPA rebel was killed and another was wounded in an encounter with Army soldiers in a hinterland village in Marilog District in Davao City.

Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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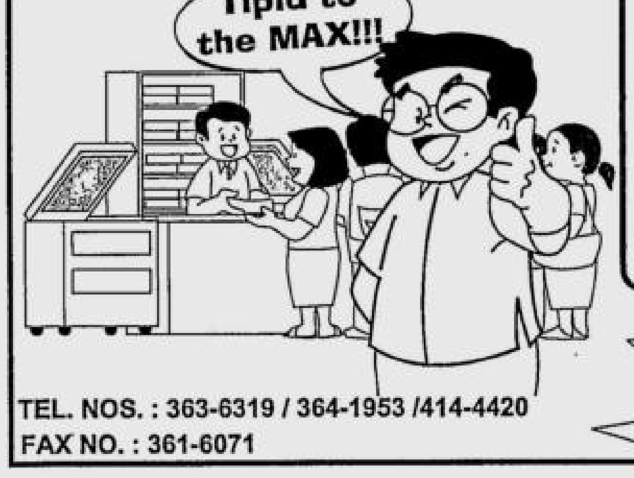
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300 more US soldiers eyed for Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The United States may send 300 extra troops to the island province of Basilan to help with infrastructure projects if the Philippine government approves, a military official said Sunday.

Philippine military officials will recommend the extra deployment on condition the forces would be involved only in such non-combat activities, Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio said.

More than 600 American military personnel, including 160 US Special Forces deployed to Basilan, are in the Philippines for a controversial six-month counterterrorism exercise aimed at helping the local military crush Abu Sayyaf rebels who have been linked to the al-Qaida terrorist network. It is scheduled to end July 15.

Teodosio, who heads the Philippine contingent in the exercise, said the Americans were planning to rebuild roads, two seaports, an airstrip and drinking-water facilities primarily to enable the local military to deploy troops much faster.

The infrastructure also would benefit residents and traders on Basilan, a poor, predominantly Muslim island-province of more than 330,000 people, he said.

The mountainous island is the birthplace of the brutal Abu Sayyaf, which is holding an American missionary couple and a Filipino woman. The government has acknowledged that appalling poverty breeds terrorism, but its economic projects have been stymied by funding problems, corruption and law-and-order problems.

"These are massive engineering works so the Americans' stay should be extended," Teodosio told a news briefing. "Basilan is just so depressed."

Basilan officials are preparing resolutions asking the national government to allow an extension, he said.

Teodosio said he was told by Brig. Gen. Donald Wurster, head of the US contingent, that a US Army engineering battalion with more than 300 military engineers and construction workers could be sent to Basilan and finish the projects in three to four months.

The Americans would be complemented by a similar number of Philippine military engineers. Raw materials would be bought locally and laborers would be hired in Basilan, Teodosio said.

Left-wing groups oppose the US presence saying it violates constitutional restrictions on foreign troops in this former American colony. *AP*

Families of Air Philippines crash victims to file class suit

By Ayan C. Mellejor
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Survivors of those who perished in the Air Philippines crash of April 19, 2000 have vowed to file a class suit against the makers of the ill-fated Boeing 737-200.

The relatives will file the case against AAR Corp., which built the plane that crashed in Sitio Camudmud, Barangay Kamanlangan in the Island Garden City of Samal.

The case must be filed in a United States court before April 19, under the two-year deadline imposed by US law for such cases.

The crash victims' relatives are looking to charge the manufacturer with negligence, product liability and tampering of evidence.

They are banking on information the plane had been "dug up from the junkyard" when it was sold to Air Philippines.

Carlos Tolosa Capitan, leader of the foundation formed by the survivors, said they were preparing all the documents on the case to beat the deadline.

He said they were helped by the Nolan Law Group and the O'Reilly law firm. He added they will be retaining the services of US-based lawyer Kathleen Rogerstud of Sterns and Walker Chicago.

The Nolan Law Group, which is representing some victims' families, recently won a major victory for its clients that will bring the case before the Circuit Court of Cook County in Chicago.

The Nolan Law Group filed a suit in behalf of a client against the Illinois-based company that leased the aircraft to Air Philippines.

Sterns and Walker has been retained by approximately 40 survivor families.

A Sterns and Walker statement said the ill-fated aircraft "literally was risen from the ashes" after it had been retired as obsolete by Southwest Airlines which flew it for thousands of cycles. It was parked in the "boneyard for unwanted and retired airplanes in Arizona, where it sat for some time."

The plane was one of 12 Boeing 737-200s operated by Air Philippines. The plane was 22 years old and had flown 79,522 flights, according to a CNN report.

Noise barrage set today to protest oil price hikes

By Christian V. Esguerra and Carlito Pablo

MILITANT groups will stage a noise barrage today to kick off a series of protest actions against the latest round of oil price increases.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Kilusang Mayo Uno yesterday called on the public to join the noise barrage at the corner of Edsa and Aurora Boulevard in Cubao at 6 p.m.

The increase in the prices of petroleum products was part of a "triple whammy of intolerable economic attacks" that also include the proposed increase in power and water rates, the groups said.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo should be held accountable for acting more as counsel for the big capitalists rather than as a national leader with a commitment to protecting the people's welfare," Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr. said in a statement.

Malacañang could only offer its sympathy to consumers protesting the price increase.

"We regret that move... but we cannot by executive fiat repeal the law of supply and demand," Press Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

By way of consolation, Tiglao pointed out that pump prices have dropped by about P2 per liter in the last 12 months and that the 50-centavo increase was not that steep.

Tiglao said the government cannot do anything about the increase which was brought about the volatility of world prices because of tensions in the Middle East.

"How can you counter world prices by political moves?" Tiglao said.

The three major oil companies—Caltex, Petron, and Shell—have raised pump prices of petroleum products, except cooking gas, by about two percent.

The increases—by 50 centavos per liter across the board—took effect on Saturday.

New player TotalFinaElf Petroleum Corp. made a similar price adjustment, while Eastern Petroleum Corp. increased its prices by 45 centavos per liter.

Tiglao said the Palace was hopeful that the oil companies might still be able to "still mitigate their prices."

He said Malacañang was also hopeful that Energy Secretary Vincent Perez's continuing representations with the oil firms would lessen the extent of future price increases.

Tiglao said the President "wants oil prices to be kept low."

Perez has said, however, that the government can only monitor developments in the oil market because of the deregulation of the industry.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Petition for review on certiorari—In petitions for review on certiorari, the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in cases brought before it from the Court of Appeals is limited to reviewing questions of law. For a question to be one of law, it must involve no examination of the probative value of the evidence presented by the litigants or any of them. Thus, the findings of fact of the appellate court are generally conclusive on the Supreme Court which is not a trier of facts. Although said factual findings do not conform to the evidence on record, this Court will not hesitate to review and reverse the factual findings of the lower courts. In the instant case, there is sufficient basis to deviate from the rule since the extent evidence and prevailing law support a finding different from the conclusion of the appellate court. [Citations omitted.] [Justice De Leon, Jr., Second Division, Gener v. De Leon, G.R. No. 130730, October 19, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 8, 2002
Annunciation

1st Reading:	**Is 7:10-14; 8:10**
2nd Reading:	**Heb 10:4-10**
Gospel:	**Lk 1:26-38**

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

We've only just celebrated Easter and here we are again right back at the very beginning of the story. "Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end." (Easter Vigil) It's a story which begins and ends in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the origin of the new life in the womb of Mary; anoints Jesus for mission at his baptism; is released in his life-giving death; and gives birth again to the Church, the new Body of Christ, sent out on mission at Pentecost.

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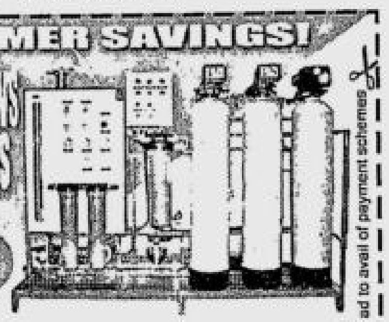

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Papal nuncio guard shot dead in Kalinga

By Martin P. Marfil

A SOLDIER was killed while two others were wounded when gunmen ambushed a military team that was on its way to provide security for the visit of the papal nuncio to the Philippines in Kalinga province on Saturday.

Sketchy reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said the dead soldier was Sgt. Victor Danga while his wounded companion was not identified.

The other wounded was one of the suspects identified as Robert Ngayab.

According to the reports, a covert security team led by Danga and Sgt. Mateo Tanuhuran of Military Intelligence Group 2 and the 501st Brigade's intelligence group, respectively, was on its way to provide security for Msgr. Antonio Franco, the papal nuncio, at around 9 a.m. when three men ambushed them in Barangay Mapaoay, Tabuk, Kalinga.

Reports from the Philippine National Police Cordillera office at Camp Dangwa said Franco was attending a liturgical ceremony in Tabuk and was not hurt.

Franco was with Bishop Carlito Cenzon of the Vicariate of Baguio and Benguet and Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan of the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao at the time.

Franco was visiting Kalinga as part of his scheduled tour of nearby Cagayan province. He was in Tuguegarao City on Saturday for a two-day visit, and was to go on a pilgrimage to the Basilica of the Miraculous Virgin of Piat in Piat, Cagayan.

Franco was scheduled to visit six churches and Catholic institutions in Cagayan. ***With Vincent Cabreza and Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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'Old-boy network' not working for Alvarez in House

By Carlito Pablo

IT seems the reliable congressional "old-boy network" is not working for Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, a former senator and congressman.

Two blocs in the House have called on the bicameral Commission on Appointments to reject the confirmation of Alvarez who used to represent Isabela province in the chamber.

The Southern Tagalog Alliance and the Mindanao Legislators Association issued separate resolutions opposing Alvarez's appointment and urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to designate a new nominee for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources portfolio.

"A more professional, just, fair, honest and competent public servant, who has respect for the fundamental rights of his fellows and who regards his office with the highest standards of accountability and service, imbued with a genuine desire of protecting our environment and natural resources, (should) be named environment secretary," said the resolution signed by 18 legislators from Southern Tagalog.

Among the issues raised against Alvarez was the reported inclusion of Earthsaver's Movement, which Alvarez founded, as one of 25 beneficiaries of a $20 million grant by the World Bank for the National Integrated Protected Areas System program of the DENR.

The lawmakers noted that the World Bank itself "has clearly identified (the involvement of Earthsaver's Movement) as a conflict of interest in the management of environmental projects that it funds."

They also pointed to Alvarez's alleged "illegal issuance" of integrated forest management agreements to five companies "despite the opposition of the DENR Forest Management Bureau Director whom the nominee (Alvarez) later relieved."

The Southern Tagalog lawmakers also questioned the "hastily lodged administrative charges" initiated by Alvarez against Peter Abaya, the former director of the Environmental Management Bureau, "on the eve of Abaya's appointment as assistant secretary of the DENR" by Ms Macapagal last September.

The bloc includes Abaya's father, Cavite Rep. Plaridel Abaya of the Liberal Party.

In another resolution, 25 members of the Mindanao Legislators Association said "a more sensitive, dedicated and competent authority should be appointed as environment secretary to ensure the effective enforcement of environmental and mining laws to protect the Filipino public and the country's natural resources."

The lawmakers raised the issue of Alvarez's supposed failure to monitor and check the mining operations in Mt. Diwalwal, whose mining wastes have affected the water systems of Compostela Valley, Davao, Agusan del Norte, Butuan City and Agusan del Sur provinces.

The Mindanao legislators said Alvarez had not shown "sensitivity to the growing public concern on health and environmental risks posed by indiscriminate disposal of mining wastes that endanger lives and ruin livelihood opportunities."

Alvarez is the secretary general of the ruling Lakas-NUCD, whose chair, Speaker Jose de Venecia, has reportedly stepped in to facilitate his confirmation when Congress reconvenes on April 15.

The President re-appointed Alvarez after the CA bypassed him before Congress went on its Holy Week recess.

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Huks: Victims of injustice

From page A1

about 23,000 survived World War II. But only 14,000 Huks were listed by the US government in the "Revised and Reconstructed Guerrilla Roster of 1948," otherwise known as the "Washington list."

On the other hand, of the 1.2 million Filipino veterans who claimed wartime service with the US Armed Forces, only 135,000 were recognized by Washington.

But Taruc said, "*maraming na-recognize na beterano di naman talaga nakilaban* (many who were recognized as veterans were not involved in the fighting). They are fake veterans."

"*Tapos may mga Huk na namuhunan ng buhay na di nasama sa* (Then many who put their life on the line were not included in the) Washington list," said Nic Nasal, Hukvets secretary general.

"Their names had been scrapped by American officers, who came after the Liberation, from the 1948 roster.

Nakakalungkot (It's sad)," he said.

A check with the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) disclosed that only 4,083 Huks and 1,761 surviving spouses of former Huk guerrillas are currently receiving the P4,500 in monthly old-age pension.

PVAO records also showed that in December, there were at least 1,696 Huk claims pending with the Camp Aguinaldo-based agency, one of those attached to the Department of National Defense.

Ex-Huks Atanacia Javier, 84, Paulino Garobo, 83, and Mariano Marquez, 79, all from Nueva Ecija, filed their claims sometime in the mid-1990s. Like Javier and Garobo, Marquez said he was not losing hope.

"*Hangga't ako'y buhay di ako nawawalan ng pag-asa* (While I'm still alive, I don't lose hope)," he added.

The PVAO has been issuing old-age pension to the following: 45,174 "recognized guerrillas" (and 31,771 surviving spouses of guerrillas classified by the PVAO to be in the same category); 4,411 "deserving guerrillas" (and 5,520 surviving spouses); 6,623 former members of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East or Usaffe (and 21,870 surviving spouses of ex-Usaffes); and 2,552 Philippine Scouts (and 5,063 surviving spouses).

An additional 2,214 veterans, whose claims were approved by the defunct Military Service Board (MSB), are also receiving old–age pension.

The MSB was created on Dec. 22, 1997 under Republic Act 8440 to review during a two-year period "applications for confirmation of military service filed by any person who claims to have performed military service in the Philippines during the period Dec. 8, 1941-July 3, 1946."

The MSB was "supposed to cover only non-recognized guerrillas. The Marcos administration recognized the Huks in 1977 but the Aquino administration declared otherwise," Nasal said.

A total of 106,463 claims remain "unacted upon because of the MSB expiration (on Jan. 25, 2001)," PVAO administrator Artemio Arugay said.

"Instead of going to Congress to get an extension of the life of the MSB law, which I'm sure will take some time, I crafted an executive order to implement the mandated but unfinished task of processing those claims. The draft EO is now under study by the defense department. It's a waiting game," Arugay, a former Navy commodore, told the INQUIRER.

Taruc said the Hukvets started filing claims in the early 1990s. Thousands of claims are still pending.

"They promise a lot when they talk to us. There are lots of handshakes, too. The PVAO says that the names are wrongly spelled, that the claimants have aliases and that there is no money. But we are not just after money. We want all Huk members to be recognized. It's fortunate that history books recognize the heroism of Huk members)," he said in Filipino.

HUKBALAHAP women members have not lost hope "in the autumn of their days" as they attend the general assembly of the guerrilla group in Cabanatuan City.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Poor and sick

"Government recognition of Huk guerrillas' wartime heroism seems fitting and long overdue," Taruc said.

"They have been waiting for 57 years and that is very humiliating. Many have already died. Many are sick and wallowing in poverty. Government gives the surviving ones a hard time and treats them like mendicants, ignoring the fact that they're old and their number is dwindling fast."

Taruc said "it's sad" because as early as Oct. 9, 1977 then President Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree 1207 officially recognizing the former members of the Hukbalahap under Luis Taruc who fought the Japanese as elements of the underground forces of the Philippine Commonwealth government during World War II.

Section 3 of PD 1207 specifically tasked PVAO with processing the Huks' claims "in coordination with the organizers or commanders of the Hukbalahap under Luis Taruc," formed on March 29, 1942 in a forest clearing on the boundary of Pampanga and Nueva Ecija.

In July 1990, then Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos issued Department Order A-70-B, saying "the unrecognized guerrillas of the wartime Hukbalahap fall within the purview of the term veteran as defined in Republic Act 6948." The directive, he said, was "in light of the nugatory circumstances and factors that rendered the provisions of PD 1207 inoperative and ineffectual."

The DND order defined unrecognized guerrillas as those whose names were not included in the Washington list.

In a meeting on April 12, 1991, the Huks managed to convince the defense department that "application papers for old-age pension of Huk veterans shall no longer be marked 'unrecognized guerrillas. Instead, they shall be called Hukbalahaps."

Then Defense Undersecretary Leonardo Quisumbing also directed the PVAO to simplify the claims processing and "restore to the Huk veterans their privilege to be treated at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center and that likewise they be treated humanely."

But on Dec. 7, 1991, the new defense secretary, Renato de Villa, issued Department Order A-150-A which required other Huk members to establish their "wartime services and assumed aliases in accordance with the rules and regulations for unrecognized guerrillas as set forth in Department Order A-70-B."

In April 1995, then PVAO chief Dalmacio Pizaña Jr. declared that "mass recognition" of unrecognized guerrillas was not possible.

"As a matter of policy, the PVAO gives due course to claims for benefits of unrecognized guerrillas on a case to case basis. The status of deserving guerrillas is determined through affidavits and interviews of claimants and at least two witnesses, in addition to the verification of their names in the pertinent guerrilla roster from Missouri (US)," Pizana said.

"By referring once again to the US government list, it was clear they're making things difficult for Huks," Taruc lamented.

Like prophets

Today, Taruc said, "things haven't changed much. Like prophets in their own land, many Huks remain unappreciated by their own countrymen. Even the Veterans Federation of the Philippines has yet to admit our group as VFP member."

Asked to comment, VFP president Emmanuel de Ocampo said it was out of the question.

"The problem is they want to join as a group. But there was no Hukvets during the war. They were called Hukbalahap then. They can come in as individual members, not as a group. I cannot break the federation rules just to let them in," De Ocampo explained.

Is Hukvets a legitimate guerrilla organization?

"Yes and no. Most of their commanders I personally know. But they have post-war recruits and this is not allowed under VFP regulations," De Ocampo added.

Taruc recalled that the Huks "have repeatedly become victims of injustice, and history seems to keep repeating itself."

Historians Renato and Letizia Constantino wrote in "The Philippines: The Continuing Past" that in 1944, the Huks "thought they were welcoming an ally, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, who already viewed them as the enemy."

In a January 1945 memorandum to MacArthur, the most controversial general in US history, the US Philippine Island Forces said it was "necessary to take the wind out of the sails of this organization" which constituted a "distinct potential threat to the Commonwealth government and the future peace of the Philippines."

The Huks began to be disarmed as early as January 1945. While the Battle of Manila was still raging, Huk fighters, who had fought side by side with US soldiers, were disarmed at gunpoint by American military police. They were told they were being disarmed and their leaders arrested because they were enemies of the US and Philippine governments.

Chinoy . . .

From page A1

kidnappers at press time.

Yam's abduction comes after PNP Deputy Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, chief of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktaf), reported a decline in the number of kidnapping for ransom cases by over 20 percent, from 26 to 20 incidents, for the period of January to March this year over the same period last year.

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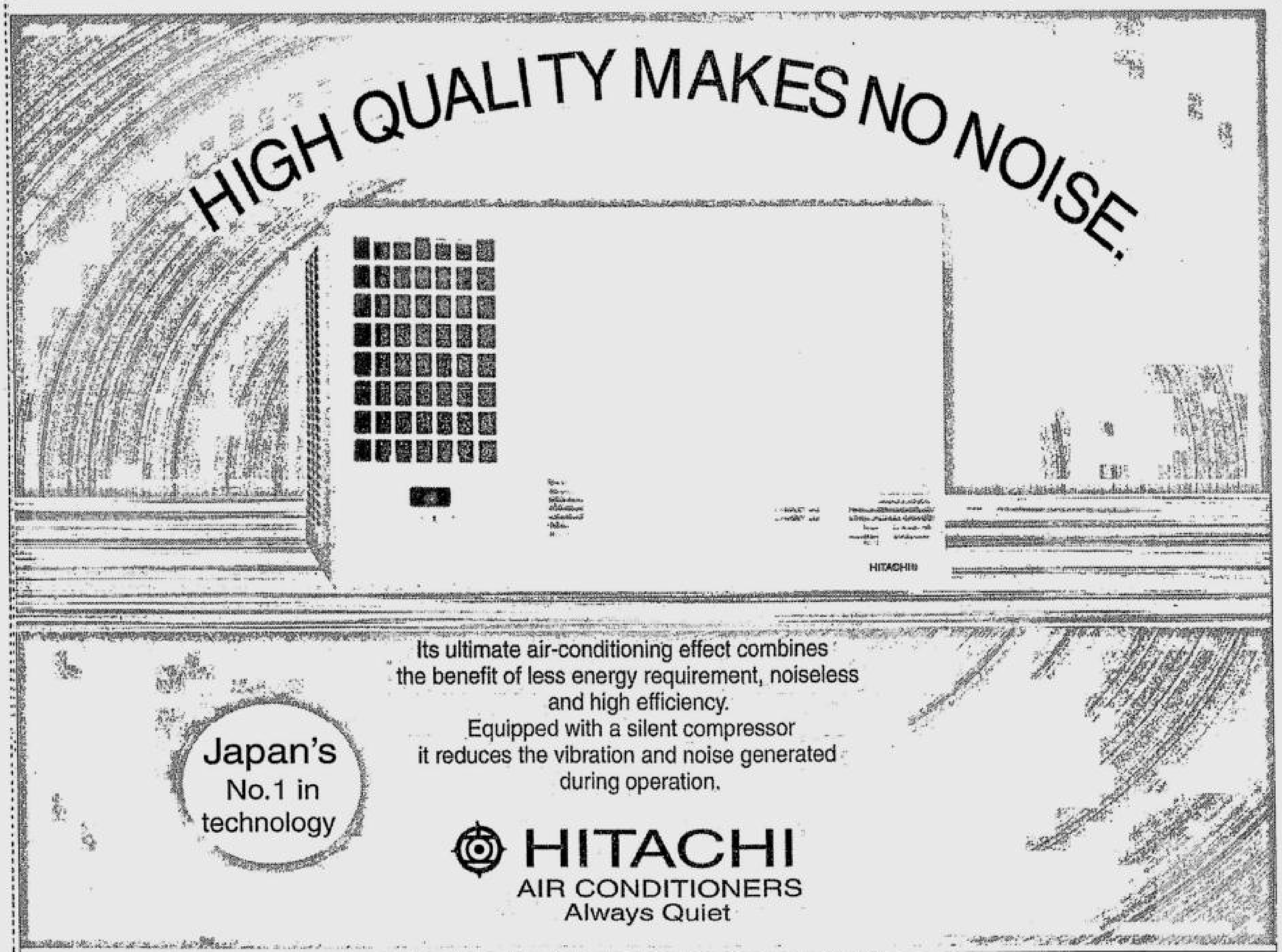

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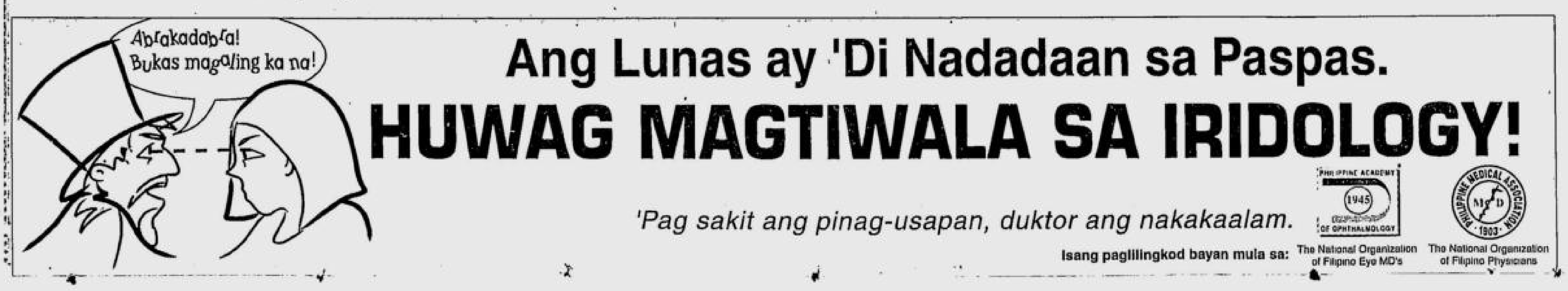

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GMA awaiting 'consensus' on Cha-cha

From page A1

Most members of Congress favor Charter change. A survey conducted by the House committee on constitutional amendments found that many House members favor a shift to a parliamentary form of government.

In the Senate, a member of the ruling majority disclosed that administration and opposition senators had reached a consensus that several provisions of the Constitution be changed.

They include adopting a federal system of government, the return of power over the police to local government units and allowing foreign ownership of land and public utilities, according to Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

Pangilinan said the debate now centered on what process to adopt—a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly. House members prefer Congress acting as a constituent assembly to introduce amendments to the Constitution instead of calling for the election of delegates to a constitutional convention.

Tiglao admitted that the President's advisers had started "studying" options related to moves to amend the Constitution.

But Tiglao pointed out that no amendments were expected to be made next year because the 2003 national budget, which he described as "already set," did not provide an allocation for Charter change.

"Definitely it won't be in 2003," he said.

The President had earlier said she was open to debates on amending the Constitution but that she was not in favor of having the changes in the immediate future.

A number of militant groups agree that the Constitution should be amended as it has, they said, served the interests of the elite more than those of the masses.

But they don't want the present members of Congress to tinker with the Charter. ***With reports from Gerald G. Lacuarta and Christine Avendaño***

Sleeping . . .

From page A1

react accordingly. If a person dies in the Matrix, his body dies in the real world because it needs a mind to control its functions.

The connection between life and dreams has been explored in the folklore and stories of various cultures for generations.

Many people believe their dreams give them guidance for dealing with problems they encounter when awake. Others believe their dreams are messages from their loved ones who have passed on.

Lately, however, what has come to matter is not whether one dreams or not, but that the dreamer awakes at all.

Many people wake up in the middle of the night to find themselves trying to catch their breath and to slow their racing pulse. Nightmares shaped by fears, food or a horror movie marathon are usually to blame for this.

Scared to death

In some cases, however, like what happened to the Hmong refugees whose story inspired the "Nightmare on Elm Street" movies, the nightmares were so real the victims seemed to have been literally scared to death.

It's a condition called *lai-tai* in Thailand, *pokkuri* in Japan and *bangungot* in the Philippines.

The Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome (SUNDS) is known to mainly affect utterly healthy young men between the ages of 22 and 45. Many of the victims had no history of heart trouble, yet they died of a heart attack.

Though SUNDS is known to occur all over the world, Asian men seem to be more susceptible to the condition, as was observed three decades ago when Asian immigrants in the United States began dying from SUNDS in record numbers.

Like the death of Morpheus at the end of Neil Gaiman's graphic novel series "Sandman," what is known about SUNDS is almost at par with the truth about Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy. There is no kindly spirit out there to help mankind sleep well, yet neither is the Sandman someone to be feared, as Metallica says.

Morpheus' death at the end of the series proves he is not immortal, yet the concept he represents, that of Dream, cannot be killed. To quote from the final volume, titled "The Wake": "How can you kill an idea? How can you kill the personification of an action?" And so Morpheus is killed, and yet Dream of the Endless lives on, his place taken by someone else.

Realistic dreams

The correlation between sleep, dreams and death has been extensively studied. People who died in their sleep were found to have suffered heart failure within an hour of entering a fatally realistic dream, which is most intensely felt during the rapid eye movement (REM) sleep stage.

Though they are actively engaged in their dreams, the sleepers' bodies do not move, which is why people sharing a bed with them don't sense their deaths immediately. Studies in the past 10 years, especially the last three, suggest that the various disorders characterized by sudden nocturnal death from a heart attack when the patient had shown no precondition are all related to one another.

Early studies suggested SUNDS might be caused by certain vitamin deficiencies. One 1994 study suggested that the poor diet of many Asians was to blame for the high incidence of SUNDS cases in Southeast Asia. It is not known, however, if any study has ever been done to find a correlation between SUNDS cases and the diets of various social classes.

Low levels of Vitamin B1 or thiamin were singled out as a determining factor in a person's susceptibility to SUNDS, especially because the B-complex in general is responsible for regulating the nervous system, as well as converting glucose into energy, thus affecting a person's metabolism.

Though low levels of Vitamin B, Vitamin C and potassium are thought to make a person more likely to become a victim of SUNDS, the theory has been considered incomplete and scientifically unsatisfactory since it doesn't answer all the questions.

In 1992, three Spanish scientists published a paper about a "newly discovered" syndrome that they named after themselves. The Brugada Syndrome was characterized by the sudden death of a person with a structurally healthy heart due to apparent heart failure. Sounds familiar?

This disorder, the Brugadas went on to say, had been observed most notably in Southeast Asia. While the relationship between SUNDS and the Brugada Syndrome would not be directly established for several more years, the paper did point out that the disorder had a genetic basis and an autosomal dominant pattern of transmission.

Not sex-linked

In other words, the gene is not sex-linked, so either parent or both are likely to have the mutated gene, though the mutation that appears in the child is not the same as his parents'.

Several mutations have since been found in the cardiac sodium channel gene SCN5A, and the loss of control over the levels of sodium in and out of the heart has been shown to cause changes in the heart rate and ultimately lead to death.

Two months ago, a paper published in the Human Molecular Genetics journal showed that the SCN5A mutations which caused SUNDS and the Brugada Syndrome were actually one and the same, which means the two disorders are identical phenotypically, genetically and functionally.

Other mutations of the SCN5A gene have also been established as the cause of other sudden death syndromes such as Lev-Lenegre's Syndrome, Long QT Syndrome and the more common Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Unfortunately, not much else has been learned since then.

Despite the fact that SUNDS has been studied in earnest for nearly a century, information about the subject isn't readily available.

One organization that is working on changing that is called Cardiac Risk in the Young (www.c-r-y.org). The data isn't quite as comprehensive as it could be, but it does at least give a list of various sleeping disorders, as well as symptoms and any existing treatments (unfortunately there are none so far).

While no one may quite understand how or when the mutations in the SCN5A gene may induce a heart attack, it does not stop people from continuing to go to sleep with the expectation that they would wake up. Nor do genetic mutations prevent people from believing that dying in one's sleep is the most painless and, thus, most preferable means of leaving this world behind.

Until the dead do visit the living and say so, however, that is a belief that has yet to be verified.

As Shakespeare ends Hamlet's soliloquy: "For in that sleep of death what dreams may come?"

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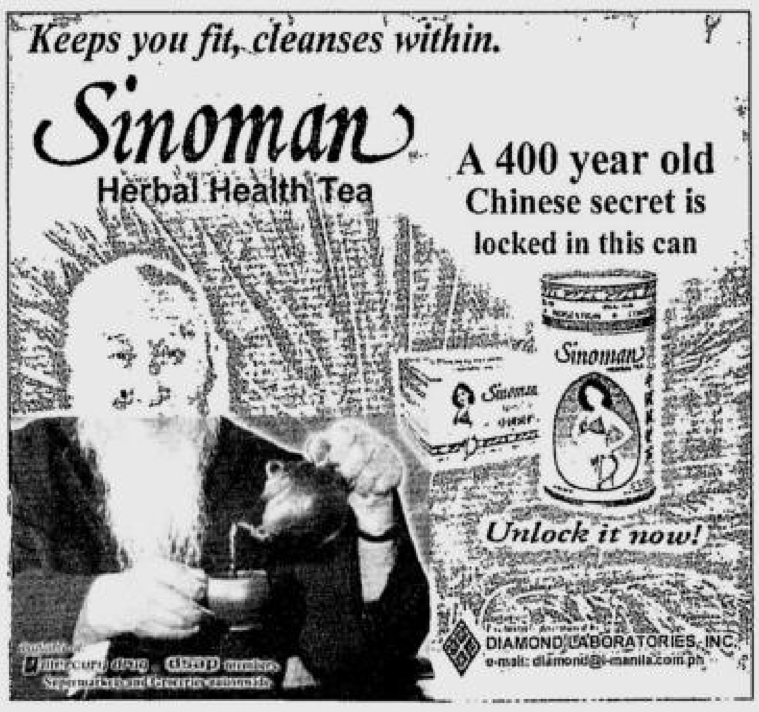

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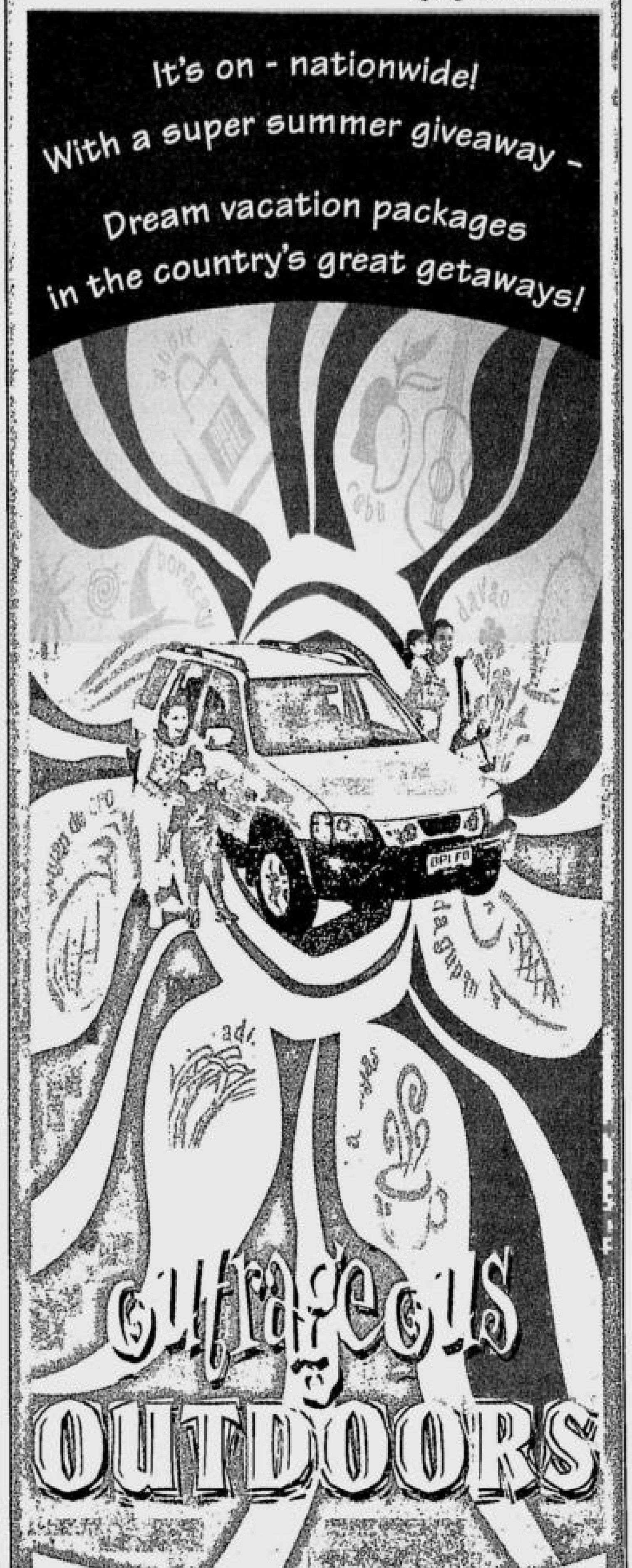

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Battling bastards

EDITORIAL

WHAT kind of nation celebrates its defeats? The kind that confuses heroism with martyrdom, the kind that reflects national events in religious light. Today we mark—a day ahead of the real milestone—the 60th anniversary of the Fall of Bataan. The early rites do not carry any special significance; they are merely a concession to the Macapagal administration's consumption-oriented policy of holiday economics. It is possible, however, that the government's holiday-makers have given the country a timely opportunity without realizing it; having dissipated our energies and our savings in yet another long weekend, we may wake up tomorrow with nothing better to do but wonder about the non-holiday that is Bataan Day.

What, we may well ask, is Bataan's place in our nation's continuing narrative? Why is a defeat—albeit a major one, with far-reaching consequences—so central to our nation's story?

Sixty years ago, the Japanese invasion of the Philippines was almost complete. Only the so-called Battling Bastards of Bataan stood in the way. With only two days of supply left, with no prospect of immediate relief, with Gen. Douglas MacArthur—contemptuously dismissed by Bataan's defenders as "Dugout Doug"—dispatched to Australia to begin a counter-offensive, Gen. Edward P. King decided that the better part of honor lay in surrender. It would take the Japanese an additional month to subdue the last redoubt, on Corregidor Island, but the fall of Bataan was the effective and glorious end—a mere four months after Pearl Harbor and the bombing of Clark and other military bases—of the Japanese military campaign in the Philippines.

The argument that the gallant defense of Bataan seriously delayed Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere is now a tainted one, because its chief proponent was the fake war hero Ferdinand Marcos. Tainted, but not specious, because the ragged forces that had fallen back to Bataan were truly ill-prepared, ill-equipped and ill-matched. That the Battling Bastards held on for as long as they did has always been seen as a moral victory.

Is this why we celebrate the Fall of Bataan? Not exactly.

King's surrender was followed by the horrific Death March, from Bataan to Manila, where American and Filipino prisoners of war were paraded through the streets as trophy of the Japanese Imperial Army. Some 70,000 started the forced march; only 60,000 reached Tarlac alive. The scale of the atrocity shocked the world, but it quickened underground resistance to the occupiers.

In the defense of Bataan, and then during the Death March, Filipino and American soldiers endured unspeakable hardship. There is no gainsaying the heroism that had become a daily habit among them: the running of great risks, the courage under enemy fire, the defiance of arresting officers. But it would not be over-reading the evidence to say that we remember the soldiers not so much for what they did but for what they did without. In Bataan and especially during the march, the soldiers also suffered the severe deprivation that is the fate of martyrs: they went without food, water, sleep, medical treatment, even hope.

In their ordeal, in their humiliation, they reminded Filipinos of Christ's passion narrative. Or more precisely, the Christian cast of the Filipino mind understood their suffering as heroic. In similar fashion, we instinctively think of our overseas workers as heroes. In fact, we call them as such, because of the sacrifices they put up with and the comforts they choose to do without. We use the diction of heroes and heroics, but reflexively use the syntax of martyrdom, of redemptive suffering.

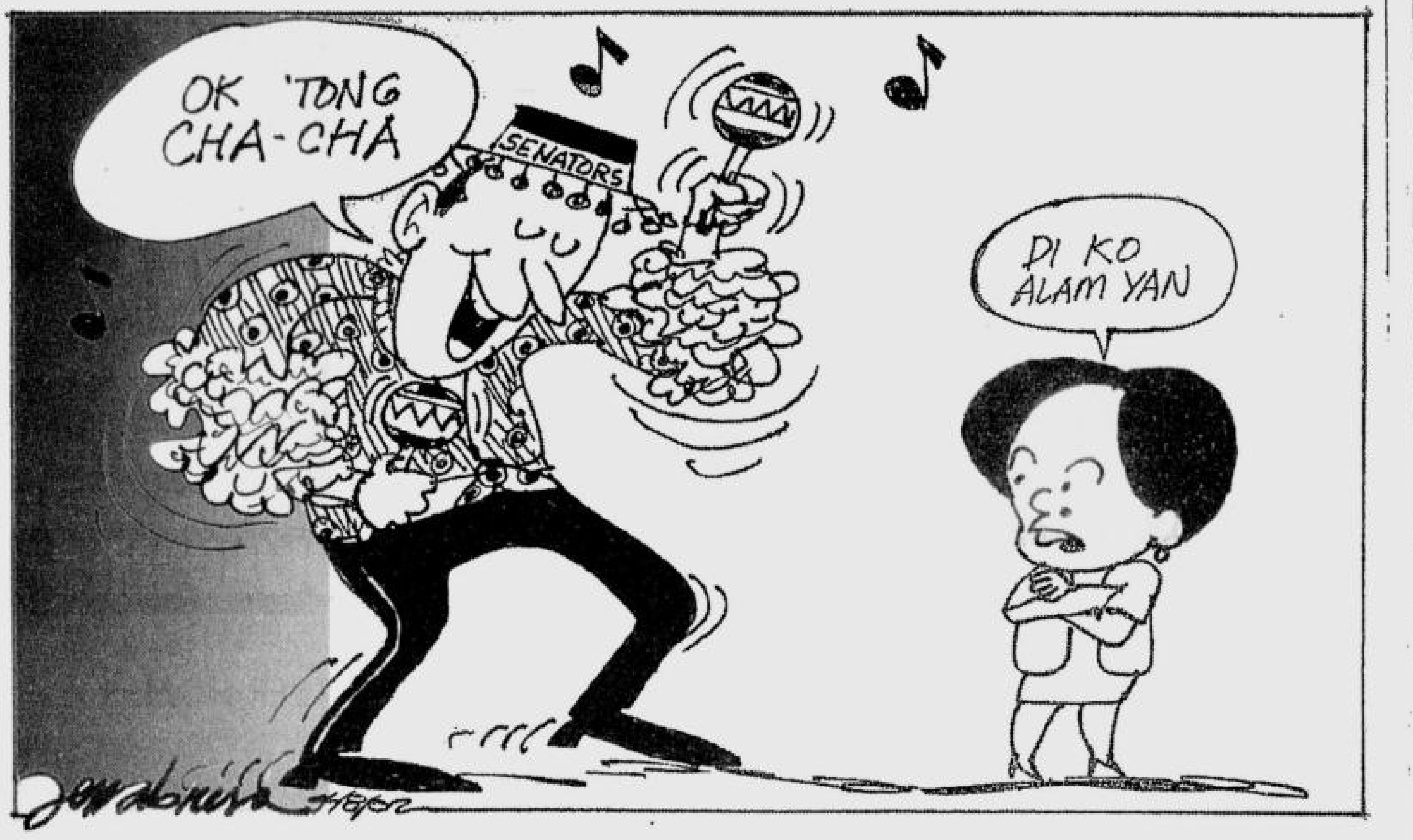
Like biblical Israel, we choose to remember our defeats not because we have had one too many, or because victories are few and far between, but because our way of thinking is inescapably religious.

End of an era

FOREIGN COMMENT

NEXT week's Westminster Abbey funeral will be a farewell to a woman who held a very special place in the heart of the nation. But it will tell us who we were, not who we are. It will be the formal laying to rest of an era that in other respects finished long ago and cannot be recreated. When the pomp is done, therefore, and the captains and the kings depart, this country will need to consider how much longer the monarchy can properly continue to hold the place in our national life that the Queen Mother did so much, so remarkably, to sustain in defiance of the times. It will be no disrespect to her for this debate to begin properly now. On the contrary, it is yet another tribute to her, It is time to look to the future and to a different Britain.

The Guardian (London)



Malang on transfer of Bonifacio Monument

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THESE things creep up on you and you don't notice them. Public officials, the rich and the privileged, are bothered only slightly but the poor are getting desperate. Last Sunday, the maid who comes to the house to do the housecleaning was agitated. *"Paano na po 'yan,"* she said, *"tumaas na naman ang presyo ng gasolina. Ibig sabihin tataas ang pasahe, ang presyo ng bigas at iba pang bilihin, ang* tuition *sa* school. *Tataas rin ang kuryente, ang tubig, ang upa sa bahay, ang cemento…tumataas ang presyo ng lahat. Ang hindi lang tumataas ay si* Presidente Macapagal."

I was stumped. What she said were all true. Prices of everything were going up except the height of the President. If that was a plea for a raise, I got the hint. But the President should wake up to what has crept up on her largely unnoticed—that the prices of everything are going up. And that she should do something about it, I mean something really significant and meaningful.

Going to the urban poor areas to distribute bags of goods and deliver speeches and promises is a mere palliative, a *consuelo de bobo* meant to get votes for 2004. What the people need are not handouts and promises but jobs, a means of livelihood. But the President is wasting so much time going to squatter colonies to distribute relief goods for photo ops that she has no time to do some serious planning to lift the nation from the depths in which it has sunk.

Whatever you do now, Ms President (those goods you distribute will last no more than two or three days), if the people are still hungry by 2004, they will not vote for you.

* * *

Until I saw the front-page photographs of President Macapagal planting rice, I didn't realize that palay is planted with the tips of the thumb and forefinger, with the three other fingers raised so they won't touch the mud. All Philippine presidents from Manuel L. Quezon did this gimmick for the benefit of photographers (Quezon did it with his boots on but GMA did it barefoot) but none of them was able to make planting rice fun nor did they improve the lives of rice farmers. Planting rice, until now, is not fun even if President Macapagal was smiling when she was photographed doing it. With a guitarist playing beautiful music behind her *pa*, as in an Amorsolo landscape.

Indeed, the lives of rice farmers are getting harder and harder because they get little help from the government while the rice farmers of Thailand and Vietnam are subsidized by their respective governments. That is why they can afford to export (or smuggle) their rice to us at low prices.

Do we see the Philippine government under Ms Macapagal subsidizing our rice farmers? Not by a long shot.

* * *

The artist Malang—who had just lost his wife Mary—sent me a letter regarding the transfer of the Bonifacio Monument which is about to be run over by the MRT and LRT trains. Opinions and suggestions vary:

Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo: "Move the monument to Barangay Tala."

Sen. Blas Ople: "Definitely not to Tala."

Kaanak heirs of Katipuneros: "The Tala Estate is a trash can."

Mayor Lito Atienza: "Welcome to Manila."

Citizen Jerry Abiog: "Transfer it to Fort Bonifacio."

Sculptor Jerry Araos: "To UP."

National Museum: "No comment."

National Commission for Culture and the Arts: "No comment."

Definitely, the Bonifacio Monument by National Artist Guillermo Tolentino must be moved out of its present ugly site. But not to remote Tala, everybody agrees.

But Mayor Malonzo wants the monument to stay in his city by hook or by crook. He is now planning ambitious (and very expensive) underground roads to preserve the present site of the monument.

"Mayor Malonzo, don't be greedy," wrote Malang. "Be patriotic. What's wrong with removing the Bonifacio Monument from Caloocan's unsightly site? What's wrong with moving it to a place where every Filipino can see it and be proud? *Ang bansa ang makikinabang at hindi* Caloocan *lang*.

"Had the plight of the monument not appeared in the newspapers, you would not have noticed it at all. When did you last clean it? From its condition, probably not even once. *Ang* Rizal Monument *sa* Luneta *ay mayroong* honor guard, *ang* Bonifacio Monument *sa* Caloocan *ay mayroong* smoke-belchers *at kotong* cops."

Why should the Bonifacio Monument be moved out of its present ugly site? Malang counted the reasons:

1. The unsightly Caloocan Rotunda doesn't do justice to the great masterpiece of Tolentino.
2. The Tolentino sculpture has been judged one of the best in the world and must be seen by the world.
3. The monument must be seen by the youth to instill in them love for country.
4. Absolutely not to Tala. All these years, Caloocan officials didn't care for the monument until the public uproar.
5. The MRT and LRT are coming.

Why transfer it to the Luneta?

1. Bonifacio is a Manileño
2. At the Luneta, every Filipino, rich or poor, will be inspired by Tolentino's masterpiece. The youth will be inspired by the heroic deeds of the Katipuneros.
3. The monument will be admired by local and foreign tourists.
4. The area is free of smoke-belchers which will be good for the monument.

Why the rush?

1. Time is running out. We must decide now.
2. We must create a committee to study the problems we may face during the transfer. We should ask the help of the Italian government. The sculptures were cast in Italy where Tolentino studied. We need experts to dismantle the monument.
3. Politics should not be involved here. Bonifacio died because of Cavite politics.

Lost souls

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THAT was a very interesting letter Ramil Ramasta wrote, which came out in Letters section last Saturday. Ramasta is a Filipino living in the United States, and he is filled with much angst over the loss of his Filipino soul. "Whenever I think of how much of Filipino culture my family and I have lost over the 14 years that we have spent in this country, it makes me want to scream and cry." He feels particularly frustrated, Ramasta says, at losing his fluency in Bisaya and Tagalog. His parents, not wishing him to speak English with their accent, have insisted he speak only English in America.

He used to think, Ramasta says, that this was a natural experience all immigrants went through. But he was startled to find out that that wasn't true at all. His Chinese, Indian and Vietnamese friends had no such problems. They retained a great deal of their language and culture, and took much pride in them. "My Chinese friends observed Chinese holidays, were given red envelopes on Chinese New Year and were served moon cakes. There was no such thing for me."

I heard the same complaint from thoughtful Filipinos in the United States when I was there last year, and from the e-mails I got from the various columns I wrote about sense of country. The Filipino community in the United States likes to deny its youth the opportunity to learn more about their country and culture the better presumably to make them adjust more smoothly into their adopted country. Or as some families put it more bluntly, to make them more like Americans.

A Fil-Am who had spent all his life in the United States told me that until the late 1970s, he knew next to nothing about his country of origin. He was born in the United States, grew up in the United States and went to school in the United States. His parents were not particularly anxious to teach him even Philippine history. At the very least, they considered it irrelevant. At most, they considered it a hindrance.

What changed everything was the publication of Alex Haley's book, "Roots," or more importantly its conversion into a TV series, which became a monster hit. Overnight, having roots that went beyond America became hip, the more exotic and impoverished the roots, the hipper. He was in high school at the time, the Fil-Am told me, and his teacher assigned them to trace their own roots. That was the first time he learned about Philippine history, in part by going to libraries and in part by badgering his parents for information—which they were obliged to supply on pain of their son not doing well in class.

He has been fascinated with Philippine culture ever since, and has made it his lifetime commitment to know as much about it as he can. He has been to the Philippines several times, and has always felt his stay has been very short. He entertains the thought of living here one day.

Unfortunately, he is the exception rather than the rule. The search for roots itself became a passing fad in the United States, and was even more short-lived within the Filipino community. That community promptly went back to hammering unto its youth the apparent blessings of uncritical assimilation. The result, as other thoughtful Filipinos in the United States told me, was that the Fil-Am has been cast into some kind of limbo, neither being Filipino nor American. He has lost his cultural identity as Filipino, but he isn't quite accepted as American.

I've always thought, however, that this isn't just a problem of Filipinos in America, this is a problem of Filipinos in the Philippines. The confusion doesn't just come from being relocated elsewhere, it comes from our very condition of being. The problems of identity of the Filipino in the United States in fact begins with the problems of identity of the Filipino in the Philippines. It's not just Filipino parents in the United States who deny their children access to Philippine history and culture the better to make them more like Americans, it is Filipinos in the Philippines. That is particularly true of the rich and middle class, who raise their kids in preparation for living in the United States. That is the Filipino dream, to live in America and hopefully become an American citizen. The path toward that end is seen as obliterating any trace of the past.

It's tragic, not least in its results, which is to make the Filipino neither here nor there—in the United States as well as in the Philippines. It's also a wrong path. I remember in this respect one very wise creative writing teacher from university days who showed us the folly of writing for "posterity" or for "a universal audience." People who wrote for posterity and for a universal audience, he said, were promptly forgotten, if not completely ignored. It was people who wrote about their particular time and their particular place—like John Steinbeck and Nick Joaquin—who were long remembered. Paradoxically, it was stories bounded by time that lived on for all time. Paradoxically, it was stories about very distinct experiences that spoke to all peoples.

It's the same thing here. People who obliterate their past, or their cultural distinctiveness, to be assimilated into another society or culture are promptly forgotten and ignored. It's the people who have a very keen sense of their ethnic and cultural distinctiveness who get to be listened to and taken seriously. They have something to contribute. The power of America precisely is that it is a melting pot. You have no ingredient to add to the melting pot other than imitation salt, you will be thrown away. It is no accident that the Asians who have gotten ahead in the United States are the Chinese and Indians, or closer to home, from Southeast Asia, the Vietnamese and Thais.

If you're an American, which food would you rather have, Jollibee hamburger, or Vietnamese noodle and very hot Thai soup?

GMA's political sense

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo hosted an informal party at Malacañang to celebrate her 55th birthday last Friday evening, which drew quite a few hundred guests. The buffet fare was simple but the camaraderie among kindred spirits, many dating from Edsa I days, was quite warm and everyone seemed to feel good about the state of affairs these days. The birthday girl, dressed in her favorite red, went around with a big smile, shaking hands and bussing cheeks, evidently upbeat over a few things, not the least the upgrading by Standard & Poor's of the country's credit rating from negative to stable and the promise by big transport organizations not to raise fares despite the increase in oil prices. Husband Mike, who has been out of the limelight for a while, had been placed by his wife in charge of the reception and that evening he seemed satisfied that all the guests appeared to be having a nice time.

* * *

A topic at that party was not only GMA's youthful looks, which she had earlier ascribed to her "genes," but also where she was getting all her stamina for someone at 55. GMA was up very early that morning at Subic Freeport for a Mass at nearby Lubao Cathedral, and through the day she had benefit programs lined up in Central Luzon and Metro Manila such as distributing land titles and housing certificates and a planting rice sequel good enough to be a tourism poster. The night before, she and Mike had stayed at Subic in what was termed one of those rare relaxing evenings with few state problems to confront—a real birthday treat. Earlier the President played golf with Subic chief Felicito Payumo and some investors. On hand to greet her were the golf caddies and umbrella girls in one row, and across were the Taiwanese investors, some of whom had flown in for the inauguration of China Trust, a new bank at the Freeport. It is an indication of her heightened political acumen that GMA went straight to the group of caddies and umbrella girls and shook their hands, to their squeals of delight; only later did she greet the investors.

* * *

Definitely a must in this season's cultural-social calendar is a special, invitation-only concert this Wednesday, April 10, at 7:30 p.m., featuring traditional Philippine music, sponsored jointly by the German Embassy and the Kinderhilfe Philippinen for the benefit of former street children sustained in school by Fr. Pierre Tritz's Erda Foundation. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m. will precede the concert, which will be held at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium of the elegant RCBC Building in Makati City.

This concert, titled "Kaplilang-Lilang" (a Maguindanao term for entertainment), was organized by a dynamic Filipina lady named Anita Nowack, a longtime resident of Germany and married to retired German banker Olaf Nowack. For years now, Ms Nowack, who is president of Kinderhilfe Philippinen, has been organizing in Germany a cultural-cum-social event featuring Filipino artists working with indigenous music and musical instruments. Kinderhilfe's beneficiaries are Manila's street children-scholars, including some 700 youths from poor families currently enrolled in the Erda Technical and Vocational High School. These annual concerts are held in the Saarbrucken Castle in Germany.

* * *

This year, however, while on her annual vacation here with her husband, Ms Nowack thought of staging the benefit concert here. On Wednesday she and the German Embassy will bring together Filipino artists well known for their indigenous music and performances, using the Kulintang and other indigenous instruments. One of them is the Maguindanao Kulintang Ensemble, composed of Manila-based traditional musicians from Maguindanao, led by Prof. Aga Mayo-Butocan, a PWU-trained internationally renowned musician. Another is Herminigilda Bustos, a graduate of the Philippine High School for the Arts who majored in the kulintang and minored in piano, and now a member of the Philippine Foreign Service; Bustos was assigned for seven years in Germany where she became very active in promoting traditional music. There's also the AILM Chorale-Asian Ensemble, whose 25-30 members from various Asian countries have a repertoire of Western and Asian folk songs and liturgical music as varied as their membership. The children of Erda's Tondo project, Sabana, who trained in traditional music under Professors Mayo-Butocan and Bustos will also render numbers; in addition, there will be a surprise number from a distinguished member of the diplomatic corps.

The Le Souffle Restaurant of Billy King and the Rudolf Lietz Inc (The Quill) are the main sponsors of Wednesday's concert. For more information, please call Erda Tech administrator Wilhelmina Martinez, at 521-3547/564-2608 and 564-1857.

* * *

Last Thursday morning the metropolis came to a virtual standstill. I was at the market to buy some vegetables and fish, but I could hardly get any attention as my *suki* and the other vendors were glued to the TV, following the funeral Mass for Rico Yan, many of them with moist eyes. Later I stopped by the supermarket to pick up some Diet Pepsi and many personnel were also glued to the TV. It was truly incredible. Being of the older generation, I didn't know Rico personally, but I could see how the young people were so affected. My househelpers could not eat their dinner the evening he died. I never met Rico's parents, but my husband and I know former AFP chief, Gen. Manuel Yan, his *lolo*; his uncle, Brig. Gen. Sonny Yan and his wife Beverly; and his aunt Mawie and her husband, PNP National Capital Region commander Edgar Aglipay. To them our personal condolences. It's difficult to understand the will of God in plucking a young man in the prime of life, but their consolation is that Rico was so loved.

Surfing Siargao history

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

INTERNET surf engines list over a thousand websites on Siargao Island, and mostly by foreign webmasters. Siargao is definitely on the world map. But if you look at your map of the Philippines, Siargao is that island on the northeasternmost tip of Mindanao, and that will already explain to you its relative isolation.

It lies veritably at the edge of the Philippine Deep. In fact, to get to the island used to be a grueling four-hour voyage aboard rickety wooden boats across treacherous Pacific currents. Not anymore, now with modern fastcraft that seem to slice through the notorious Surigao whirlpools in just an hour and 45 minutes.

I was left puzzled at how those Spanish missionaries of the 1600s managed to cross to those islands. The winds are fierce and you could almost feel the pull of the currents across those white crests, and yet this was summer when the Pacific is at its calmest. Somebody terribly misnamed the Pacific Ocean.

But the voyage itself is a visual feast. Cutting through the emerald isles of Surigao, the boat enters the Hinituan Island Passage, which one website announces as the "Gateway of Discovery." I wondered where such an appellation came from and remembered a 1760 European-made map of the Philippines by the cartographer Lowitz who marked the Hinituan Island Passage as "Derrotero de Hernando Magallanes, Anno 1521." The Lowitz map, however, was only a copy of the 1734 Murillo Velarde map which made no such "discovery" claims. Moreover, the Lowitz map was made nearly 200 years after Magellan's Philippine voyage. (May God forbid that Congress should even dream of declaring a foolish national holiday marking the "discovery" of the Philippines by Magellan.)

Nonetheless, Siargao has attained world fame for the surfs of General Luna (GL, as the locals fondly call their town), which have been known to surge from nine to 12 feet high. The mayor of GL explains that in Siargao nine out of 10 waves form a barrel, in contrast to Hawaii's six out of 10. Siargao's surfs are definitely not for beginners.

The Siargao International Surfing Cup, held every September, attracts the best and most famous surfers from around the world.

Running parallel across the 27-kilometer glistening white sand beaches of GL is a barrier reef against which the mighty Pacific waves pound with such gigantic and thundering roar. Beyond this barrier reef is the open Pacific.

Siargao offers many other attractions that a week of island exploration is not enough. Tropical jewels of isles and islets that are within reach in five or 10 minutes dot the GL lagoon. One also finds in the town of Del Carmen the largest ecologically protected mangrove swamp in the Philippines, still teeming with crocodiles. There are lagoons and coves all with powdery white sands, tropical rain forests, marshlands, endangered species, you name it, Siargao is eco-tourism galore.

With its relative isolation, the island makes for a good study on culture persistence. One finds in Siargao something that is probably not found anymore anywhere else in the Philippines. This is its tradition of town criers, a remnant of the Spanish era when the gobernadorcillo issued edicts to the townsfolk. The edicts covered a variety of communal concerns, from simple announcements of public significance to a prohibition of slaughtering animals.

Jaime Plaza Rusillon, the local historian who was also GL mayor for 16 years, fears that the town crier may eventually face extinction. Cell phones are already ubiquitous in Siargao. But the municipal governments of Del Carmen and GL continue to use the town criers to announce recently enacted ordinances of the Sangguniang Bayan, contests for street beautifications, prohibition for eating *kinilaw* during a certain period, etc.

Here, town criers are still called *bandillo*, from the Spanish word *bando* or edict. Standing on street corners, *bandillos* vocalize the announcements while townsfolk gather to hear them. It is a unique tradition of oratory. It reminds us of the town crier in Nick Joaquin's "May Day Eve" who announces even the time: "*Guardia Sereno, Alas Doce Han Dado!*"

But as in the rest of the archipelago, Siargao is being inundated by a sea of culture change, although travelers liken it to how Boracay was many years ago before the crowds. Yet Holy Week in Siargao is a period of intense domestic tourism. While the beaches and outlying islands teem with guests, attendance at church rites have dwindled. It is certainly disturbing to see Catholic Filipinos lose their traditional religiosity and church attendance when carousing gives way to what used to be a quiet and somber Good Friday mood. But despite the tensions of modernity, GL locals maintain their indigenous Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. Devotees join the early morning procession walking barefoot around the streets of town, paved with GL's powdery white sand.

It is good to touch base with local historians who sometimes are an unsung lot. Being far from archival centers, their output is wrongly perceived as devoid of solid research and seldom reaches the pages of history textbooks. Today's trend toward history from the grass roots increasingly gives importance to oral history. In GL, Rusillon is regarded as the local sage. He is also the grandson of Silvestre Plaza, GL's first municipal mayor. In 1929, Plaza petitioned Manuel Quezon to restore the townhood status of Cabuntog, its old name since the 1600s. Quezon agreed, but suggested that the name be changed after that of a national hero. Gazing up the walls of Malacañang, Plaza found the portrait of General Antonio Luna. And so General Luna it became.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

Myanmar faces Asean pressure to change

NEWS ANALYSIS

Dominic Whiting

YANGON—Myanmar's military rulers, marching completely out of step with regional efforts to boost trade and investment, could soon face pressure from Southeast Asian allies to embrace political change, diplomats say.

Myanmar has been a troublesome partner in the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) ever since it joined in 1997, and its generals went a stage further last week by announcing a ban on all foreign trading firms, most of which are from Asean states.

The move, which Yangon said was aimed at protecting local businesses, has raised hackles in Asean, which is trying to ensure sustained growth by liberalizing trade and investment.

Thailand's Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai brought up the issue with his counterpart Win Aung on Saturday and Thai officials said Asean would try to persuade Myanmar to reverse the decision.

They said Win Aung had replied that foreign trading firms would have to enter joint ventures with Myanmar companies if they wanted to continue operating.

Although Asean is still far from a collection of model open economies and sticks to a policy of non-interference in the affairs of member states, Myanmar's increasingly introspective line is testing its patience, diplomats in Yangon say.

"A number of the firms are from Asean, especially Singapore," said one. "It's going to be taken as a very unfriendly act...another in a long string of insults to investors and traders."

"It hurts Asean's investments—they don't have a lot of spare money—and Asean's reputation." Foreign businesses in Myanmar already face pressure from human rights groups who say their presence props up the military regime, and are hampered by offbeat economic policies which blend mysticism and communist-style central planning.

"People have been pulling out for five years," said a Western diplomat. "You can make money on deals—gems, petrochemicals, teak or drugs—but fixed investment isn't worth it."

Foreign business people in Yangon warn the ban will cause imports of essentials such as medicines to dry up. Exports of Myanmar's main agricultural produce, grains and pulses, will also suffer and jobs will inevitably be lost, they say.

Myanmar is already slipping down the ranks of the world's poorest countries, but its ruling generals deny anything is wrong. They say frequent day-long power cuts are due to newly prosperous people buying electrical appliances. A slumping currency and near hyperinflation are blamed on speculators.

Shunned by the West, the generals value the legitimacy Asean membership confers, and clearly reveled in their role as hosts to a weekend meeting of the group's finance ministers, even if their uniforms and medals looked curiously out of place among the sober business suits of visiting delegates.

Escorted to the meeting by scores of machinegun-wielding soldiers, military intelligence chief Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt told ministers Myanmar's economy was "vibrant" and should grow by more than 6 percent annually in the next five years.

But countries like Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, which invested heavily when Myanmar began opening its economy in the early 1990s, are starting to see it as a burden which not only offers poor returns, but hurts Asean's ties with Western countries pressing for change.

"These countries have bigger fish to fry," said the Western diplomat. "Their relations with other countries—the EU, Japan and United States—are very important."

Western diplomats predict that as Asean patience with Myanmar wears thin, key members will start to put pressure on the regime to press ahead with political change.

The junta has been engaged for the last 18 months in UN-brokered talks with Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD), which swept democratic elections in 1990 by a landslide but was never allowed to rule.

Although the junta has released more than 250 political prisoners since the talks started and eased some restrictions on the NLD, progress has been painfully slow. Suu Kyi herself remains under house arrest and up to 1,600 political prisoners still languish in jail.

Diplomats say Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is perhaps the only figure who could persuade Myanmar's generals to move forward in the talks.

He is thought to have much influence among Myanmar's top brass and is the main backer of compatriot and UN envoy Razali Ismail, who is due to visit Yangon again on April 23.

Diplomats say Mahathir could quietly encourage change without it appearing to be imposed from outside. "He's the elder statesman of Asean and he's combative as far as Asean's relations with the West are concerned," one said.

"And Malaysia should be an attractive model for them, as in many ways are China and Vietnam. The models there mean you preserve national unity and get development as well." **Reuters**

How PDI gets to its Middle East readers

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

LAST week's column ("Ardent wish of an OFW"), which featured the request of a Filipino professional based in Singapore for more positive news about the country, elicited concurring reaction from several Filipinos working in Hong Kong, Japan, Saudi Arabia and the Arab Emirates.

They too, long for news from home that can make them proud of themselves. They look forward to the day when they can be with their families once again without having to worry about the next day's meal.

From the Kingdom of Bahrain, Avelino Falcon sent an e-mail to say that although the INQUIRER's website, INQ7.net, is providing him and other fellow expatriates with up-to-the-minute information about the events in our country, he still wants to have the feel of a real newspaper.

He wrote: "The Philippine Daily Inquirer is the most sought after Philippine newspaper here. It's unfortunate that it is only available on Saturdays. We OFWs here do not mind paying almost a hundred pesos per copy, just make it available even twice or thrice a week.

"Please do something to have your paper reach us as often or as frequently as possible. It is a good antidote for homesickness. Yes, we can access it through the Internet *pero iba 'yung hawak mo ang kopya ng* INQUIRER *habang nagpapahinga ka sa* quarters *mo. Sana may magawa kayong paraan* (but it is different if you are holding a copy of the INQUIRER while you are resting in your quarters. I hope you can do something about it).

"The Kingdom of Bahrain is an open city and the copy of the INQUIRER is 'intact,' meaning no pages are missing when it is sold in the newsstands. It is always sold out!"

Newspaper agent

A hundred bucks for a newspaper? Wow! Anyone who is willing to part with that sum of money to be able to read in black and white the happenings in dear old Philippines must be really homesick.

The reader's letter led me to seek information on how copies of the INQUIRER reach our countrymen in the Middle East countries. I found the process amusing.

For easy coordination, only one newspaper dealer or agent has been designated by the INQUIRER to handle the delivery of the newspaper to the Middle East countries where there is a substantial Filipino presence.

Like his local counterpart, this dealer gets his allocation (2,500 copies a day) the moment the copies roll out of the presses. He pays for them at P15 per copy, minus the discount to which the dealers are entitled to, depending on their arrangements with the circulation staff.

Then he sorts them out in batches depending on their intended destination. Those going to Saudi Arabia are separated from those bound for, say, Bahrain or one of the seven states of the Arab Emirates. The bunching up is done immediately for cargo and ethical reasons.

Since flights to the Middle East countries have different schedules—some fly daily while others fly on certain days only—the dealer has to make sure the newspaper copies are properly packaged and sent to the person in the Middle East country concerned who will take care of getting them out of the airport and delivering them to the subscribers.

Censorship

However, before sending the newspapers to the freight forwarder for loading on the airplanes, the dealer has to review the pages one by one to find out if they contain editorial materials, photos or advertisements that may violate the strict moral rules of the countries where they will be delivered.

Saudi Arabia has very strict rules on the entry of written materials that contain articles about religions other than Islam, or question the authority of the royal family, or advocate certain activities that run counter to the traditions of the desert kingdom.

Neither do the Saudis allow photos of women in skimpy clothes or immodest poses, or advertisement of alcoholic beverages, or anything that in the opinion of their "morality police," violate the teachings of Islam.

While Saudi Arabia has a very conservative approach toward materials coming from elsewhere in the world, some Middle East states, like Bahrain and Dubai, are quite liberal in the enforcement of moral or ethical rules. They allow their nationals and residents to read certain materials or photos that the Saudis would not even dare talk about in whispers.

For the newspaper copies meant for Saudi Arabia and other countries with similar attitude toward perceived "works of Satan," the dealer has to make sure they do not contain anything that would justify their impounding or outright burning.

Either the objectionable material is cut out, blackened, or the entire section is discarded if its contents do not meet the moral criterion of the Saudi censors or morality police.

Pentel pen brigade

Because cutting out the materials will make the newspaper "ugly" or difficult to handle, the usual approach taken by the dealer when confronted with objectionable materials is to cover them with black Pentel pen ink.

This means the dealer's "Pentel pen brigade" has to blacken the Daily Gospel portion and any photo showing Jesus Christ or objects that relate to Christianity.

If there is a photo of, say, Assunta de Rossi wearing a two-piece bikini, she has to be covered up completely in black with only her eyes and nose showing. The same thing has to be done to movie advertisements that show women in various forms of undress.

The colorful advertisements of men and women's underwear will have to undergo retouching too. The body parts that Islamic law consider unfit for viewing by the faithful have to be blackened to prevent the corruption of their morals.

This "cleansing" process has to be done on all the copies of the INQUIRER that are bound for Saudi Arabia and other similarly ultra-conservative Middle East countries.

Given the cost of airfreight and the labor costs that go with the handling of the newspapers, it should not come as a surprise that the INQUIRER is an expensive commodity for our countrymen in the Middle East.

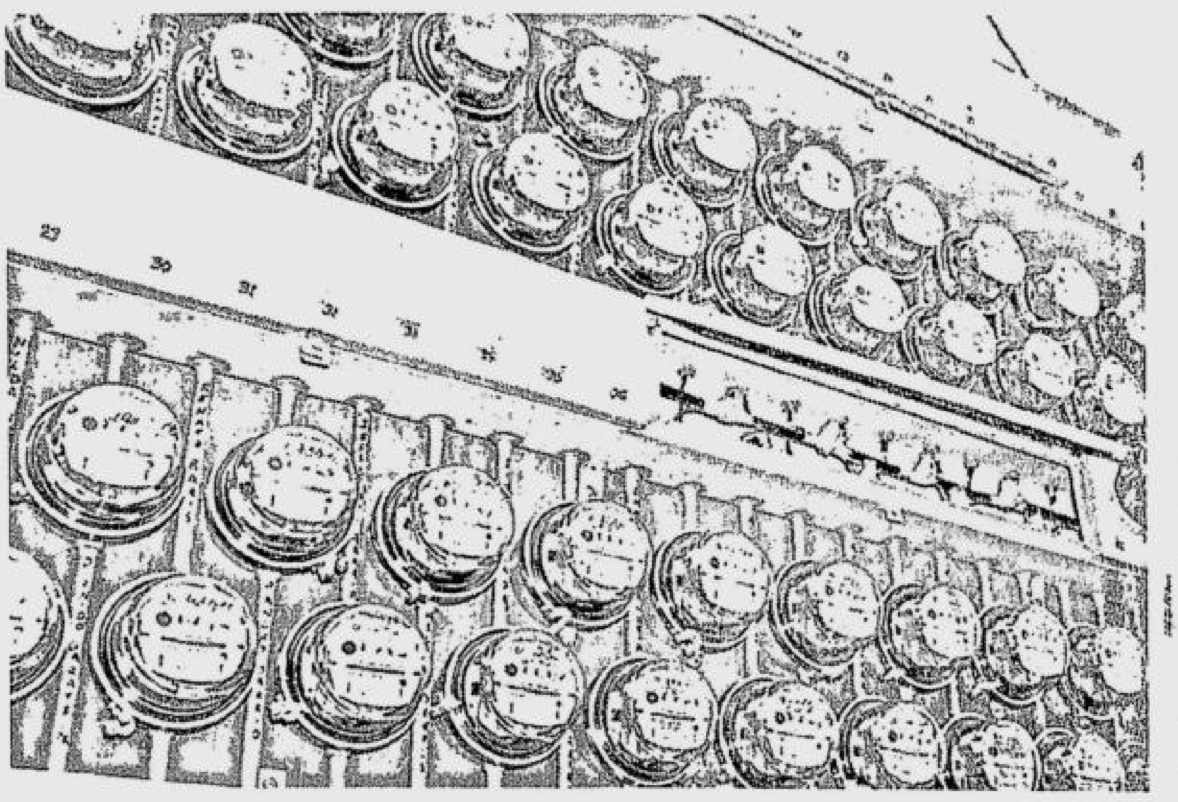
Our reader from Bahrain is lucky he gets his INQUIRER intact. No cuts, no missing pages. His counterpart in Saudi Arabia gets the sanitized version, for a higher price at that.

Thank God for small miracles.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Gov't has powers to control electric monopoly



WITH A LITTLE intelligence and understanding, but needing tons of political passion, the government can exploit market forces to give the Filipino people their share of power revenues.

Are the national and local governments so powerless to control and regulate the electric franchise? What other control levers or tools are within the government's grasp aside from trying but failing to hold back rate increases?

For one, the government must be aware it has the power to grant or deny the electric utility franchise to any entity that fails to meet social objectives.

For another, it can offer the electric utility franchise for open market bidding. The government can earn billions of pesos in premiums by awarding the lucrative franchise to the highest bidder, which is technically and financially capable of electricity generation and distribution. Bidding must be open to all parties interested, Filipino and foreign investors alike.

The constitutional prohibition on monopolies takes precedence over the preference given to Filipinos in the operation of utilities. A foreigner meeting our social objectives is preferable to a Filipino monopolist squeezing the life out of other Filipinos.

A third control lever is the government's right and obligation to tax monopoly revenues based on current market prices. Meralco, after all, charges consumers market prices. Foreign exchange adjustments in the electric bill are market-determined. So are electricity generation and distribution rates. Meralco's monopoly gains at current market prices are embarrassingly way above the regulated 12-percent return on asset base. This forces Meralco to pad its assets to camouflage and depress its reported ROI.

The national and local governments' third control lever over Meralco's monopoly revenues is the valuation, at eminent domain premium market prices, of land (particularly sidewalks and streets) on which its plants and equipment, electric posts and cables are located. Both national and local governments can levy an annual tax (10 to 15 percent) on the land value to capture substantial amounts of monopoly revenues from the electric franchise. This will reduce Meralco's profits closer to the 12-percent legal return on asset base. In any case, the people will receive the revenues through their national and local governments' social spending instead of the monopoly revenues filling the private pockets of the Lopezes.

The fourth control lever of government is to claim its revenue share per unit of production. This means that it should levy a rate (10 percent) per kilowatt sold as its share of franchise revenue. The rate may vary depending on the time period and discount rate chosen, applying a standard financial formula such as the sinking fund factor. Government's eminent or sovereign domain over monopolies and cartels applies in Meralco's case. Taxing a franchise monopoly's revenues is the sovereign's prerogative and social obligation.

In applying the proposed control levers, the government must always bear in mind some fundamental certainties:

1. The electric utility franchise value will multiply as Metro Manila's population increases and the economy grows. This premium value is over and above the cost of operations plus average return on capital. The government can capture this value by levying a tax or fee on the highest bidder during annual open bidding to operate the Metro Manila electric utility franchise.

2. Population increase and economic growth will also increase the volume of power consumed. The government should never abdicate its sovereign responsibility and obligation to get its revenue share of kilowatt units sold by the franchise monopoly.

3. Population increase and economic growth also contribute to higher market values of land, especially public lands with eminent domain such as streets and sidewalks, on which Meralco's plants and equipment, electric posts, cables and wires are located. National and local governments should level the playing field by taxing the land rent at current market prices. The rentals can be returned to the Filipino people through quantum improvements in police and fire protection, education, medical care, pension, infrastructure, national defense, parks, museums, libraries and many more social amenities of a civilized world.

Taxation of monopoly rents, to be spent for public purposes, is a social necessity and obligation of any government with democratic pretensions. The present system reveals the dictatorial character of the current regime wearing a democratic make-up. It is time for radical reform.

**—ALLAN P. E. TOLENTINO,
Unit 9 Cosmopolitan Corner,
Condominium B, Gonzales cor.
Avelino Streets, Xavierville II,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City**

Invaded, not discovered

THIS is with regard to the report from the INQUIRER's Visayas Bureau on March 14, 2002, titled "Samar folk to hold rites for Magellan discovery of RP."

A correction is clearly in order for all concerned: The Philippines was not exactly discovered by Ferdinand Magellan and company. Our ancestors were already trading with other countries like India, China, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam before Spain came to our shores. More correctly, we were "invaded" by a foreign country that was led by Magellan. The four elements of invasion like presence of foreign troops, armaments, constant bombardment and setting foot on soil were present when they accidentally arrived in 1521.

**—CARMELO A. CAMARAO,
vice chair, Alay sa Masa Movement Inc., 1 Tredia St., Phase 3,
Village East, Cainta, Rizal**

Planned delay in releasing teachers' funds

LAST March 18, in the oath-taking ceremonies of the newly elected officers of the Manila Public School Teachers Association, Education Secretary Raul Roco announced to the Manila teacher-leaders that he would immediately release the clothing allowance and productivity pay of public school teachers in the National Capital Region so they could use it for their expenses before the Holy Week.

True to his promise, the Office of the Secretary through the Department of Education-National Capital Region, released the said funds for the Quezon City public school teachers on March 22, in the amount of P39,188,000 and P19,594,000 for the clothing allowance and productivity pay, respectively. However, until this time we do not know what hit the local officials in the Division of City Schools of Quezon City to continue delaying the release of the said allowances.

Some teachers have started to believe that local DepEd officials are very resourceful in realizing savings from bank deposits intended for their benefit. We can only guess how much interest the total amount of P58,782,000 has earned in the planned delay in the release of these funds intended for our overdue benefits.

Thus, we are asking Secretary Roco to look into this matter. Let us put a stop to this scrupulous and recurring practice at the expense of our public school teachers in Quezon City.

**—FRANCE CASTRO, president, Quezon City Public School
Teachers Association Inc., c/o
Quirino High School Faculty
and Employees Association**

Victory for two women victims

IN TWO consecutive days, we saw the legal victory of two cases of violence against women. The first case was that of Juliet Yee who was sexually harassed by a Cagayan de Oro City health official eight years ago; and the other more publicized case was that of Roselyn Federico who was raped and murdered nine years ago.

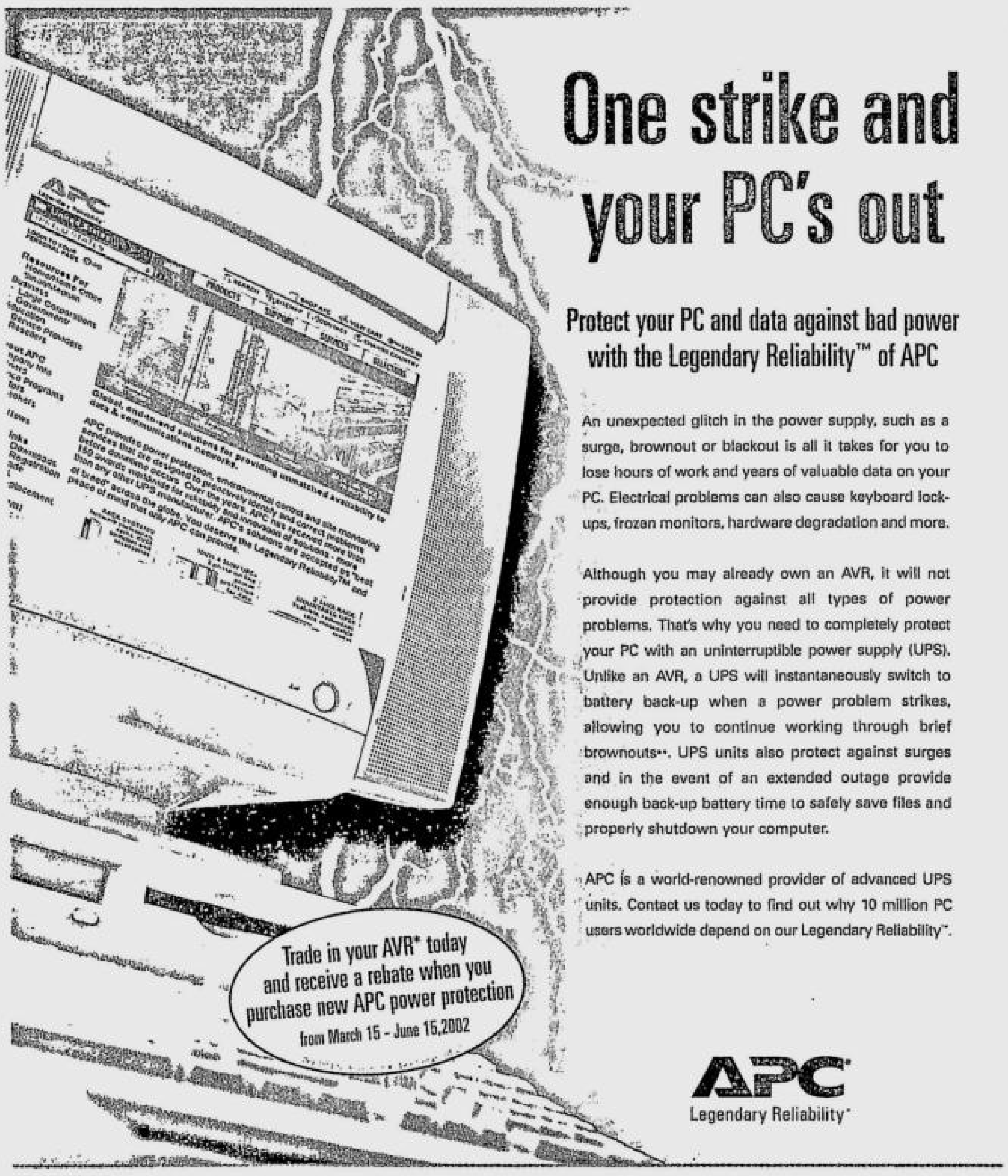
Though we consider the fact that the perpetrators will be punished as a victory for women, we lament the way their cases progressed in court. The many years that the cases spent in court were years of pain and suffering that the victims and their families had to go through.

One cannot imagine the agony of having to face the accused again after having been violated. Then, of course, there were the endless appeals and reviews that the cases had to go through until they reached the Supreme Court. No wonder many victims have chosen to remain quiet.

In the case of Roselyn, her family had to muster all their resources to sustain the case in court. Gabriela saw through the process in which the case moved on after Roselyn's family approached the group for assistance in 1993. After the case was filed, it was dismissed in 1998 although the suspects had verbally owned up to the crime. The motion to reopen the case was granted in 1999 until the recent promulgation. Justice really moves in slow motion for women victims of violence.

Thus, we commend Juliet Yee and Roselyn Federico's family, as well as other victims/survivors of violence against women, for their courage and perseverance despite the setbacks and discouragements that they and their cases encountered through the years. For us, the fact remains that in all court cases, the persistent struggle of rape victims, their families and support system is more decisive than the legal process itself. And more importantly, addressing the issue of rape and other forms of violence against women, should go beyond the legal battle.

**—EMMI DE JESUS, deputy
secretary general, Gabriela, 35
Scout Delgado St., Barangay
Laging Handa,
Quezon City**



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Andersen's troubles are its own

THIS refers to the April 1, 2002 Cocktales column of Victor Agustin, titled "SGV: Such Gross Violations."

The partners and staff of SGV & Co. are appalled that Agustin could title and write such a column which was filled with factual inaccuracies.

This is not the first time that we have had to call his and your attention to his flawed reporting. The trouble is that Agustin does not even bother to check his facts before he makes pronouncements in print.

We would like him and his readership to know the following truths:

1. SGV & Co. is 100 percent owned by its Filipino partners. SGV & Co. is a member firm of Andersen Worldwide, the umbrella organization of all Andersen member firms in 84 different countries. SGV & Co. was never "taken over by a majority American partner." It is not a subsidiary of Andersen and, by the same token, Andersen is not its parent company. SGV & Co. is an independent, Filipino professional services firm.

We do not know what Agustin meant by "hidden accounting time bombs of Victorias Milling and Ramcar." The Securities and Exchange Commission examined our working papers on our audit of the financial statements of Victorias Milling Co. and no sanctions were imposed on SGV. & Co. As provided in auditing standards, there are inherent limitations to an audit, particularly when the misstatements and concealments are perpetrated by management. Perhaps Agustin would have a better appreciation of the limitations to an audit by referring to the Statement of Auditing Standards of the Philippines No. 12 on Fraud and Error as promulgated by the Auditing Standards and Practices Council, the audit standards setting body in the Philippines.

As to Ramcar, we had previously clarified with you and the public that SGV's audit was limited to five out of the 40 entities belonging to the Ramcar/Agustines Group. The bank borrowings of the Ramcar companies that we audited were confirmed 100 percent by the creditor banks.

3. We are not "burying our heads in the sand from all the severe embarrassments that their American parent is causing them." Again, Agustin is obviously unaware of the relationship between the two professional firms. The Andersen that he speaks of is Arthur Andersen LLP, the Andersen member firm in the United States. Like SGV & Co., Arthur Andersen LLP is neither parent nor subsidiary. It is an independent professional services firm owned by its American partners in the United States.

Further, the ongoing protests by Arthur Andersen LLP employees in the United States are part of a grass-roots campaign to protest the indictment against the member firm by the US Department of Justice in relation to the collapse of Enron, an energy company based in Houston, Texas. The US employees are fighting the indictment, which they consider a "gross abuse of governmental power."

4. SGV & Co. did not "allow itself to be taken over by a majority American partner in the belief that foreign provenance would bring in a tide of foreign business." For Agustin's information, in the mid-1980s, the largest international accounting firms vied fiercely for The SGV Group to be their representative in the Asia-Pacific region. This was because The SGV Group at that time was already the largest network of business professionals with 4,000 staff members serving an enviable client base consisting of multinationals and local corporations in all the major cities in East and Southeast Asia. Most of The SGV Group members chose an affiliation with Andersen Worldwide, mainly to gain access to Andersen's superior technology and world-class training.

5. Agustin also made erroneous references to our founder, Washington SyCip, as "its unretired chair" and wrote that "SyCip was by then already serving on the board of Arthur Andersen, not subsidiary SGV." SyCip officially retired from SGV & Co. in June 1996, an event that was covered widely by both local and foreign media. Since then, he has ceased to be involved in the operations of the firm. Upon his retirement from SGV, he was requested to be an adviser to the Andersen Worldwide Organization and not as a member of the board.

Lastly, we regret Agustin's conclusion that "Alas, the foreign rainmaker also brought flood, as events now unfold in the US, that threatens to sink SGV as well." While we are all saddened by the developments in the United States and empathize with the US member firm of Andersen Worldwide, we wish to remind him that SGV & Co. retains its leadership position in the Philippines and intends to maintain it for a long, long time.

We also do not see how the incidents in the Houston and two other offices of Arthur Andersen LLP, involving a few individuals among its 28,000 employees, should affect SGV & Co. when we had absolutely nothing to do with such issues.

Moreover, this is our very "busy season" as the April 15 deadline approaches for the BIR and SEC requirements. We are very proud to say that, despite the distractions that have beset the worldwide organization, we have managed to stay focused on client service.

**—DAVID L. BALANGUE, vice chair and
deputy managing partner, SyCip Gorres
Velayo & Co., 6760 Ayala Ave., Makati City**

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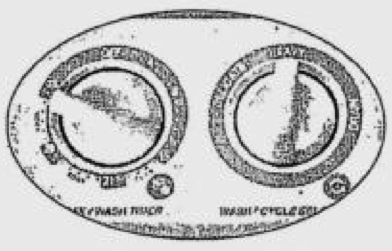

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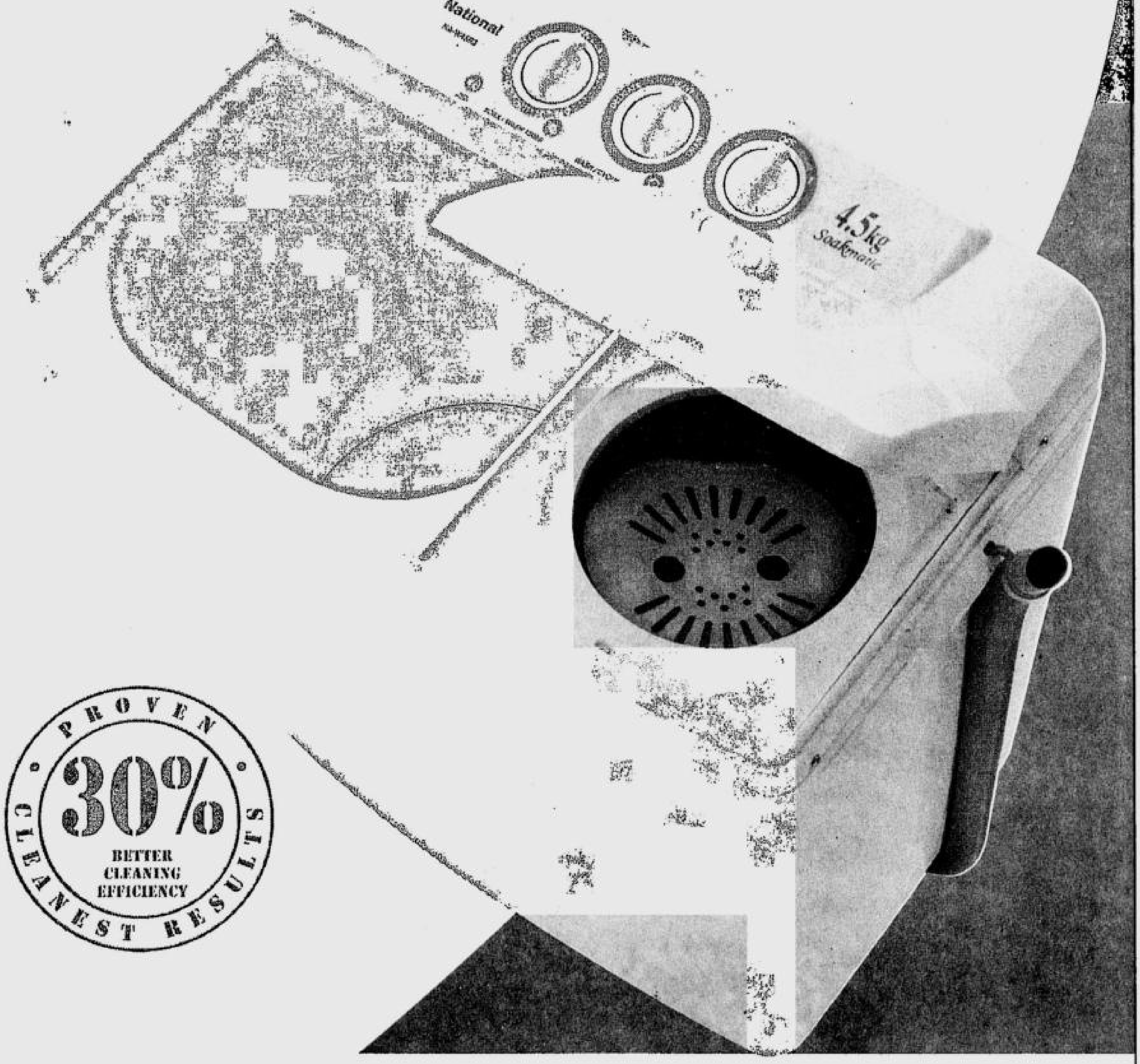

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bush, Blair vow: All options open for dealing with Saddam

CRAWFORD, Texas—US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair vowed on Saturday to tackle Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein over the threat he poses with weapons of mass destruction, saying inaction was not an option.

Bush explicitly reiterated his administration's policy was to remove Saddam from power, while Blair, who faces some stiff opposition at home to direct military action against Iraq, also said: "Iraq would be a better place without Saddam Hussein."

At a joint news conference after talks at Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas, Blair said he was sure Saddam was developing weapons of mass destruction and had no doubt he would use them against his enemies without hesitation.

"The issue of weapons of mass destruction cannot be ducked.

It is a threat. It is a danger to the world. We must heed that threat and act to prevent it being realized," Blair said.

Blair's words were seen by British political commentators as the strongest signal yet that he is prepared to back any US decision to launch military action against Baghdad.

Bush said "all options are on the table" for dealing with Iraq. Blair agreed, but stressed no decisions had been taken.

In a speech he is due to make in Texas on Sunday, Blair will say he expects US-led moves on Iraq to be decided in a "calm, measured, but firm" way, just as they were on Afghanistan.

Officials traveling with Blair said he and Bush had talked one-on-one and long into the night about the global war on terrorism declared after the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, violence in the Middle East and the issue of the threat posed by Iraq.

The two leaders also were given a briefing by the US Central Intelligence Agency early on Saturday, but officials would not divulge details.

Bush bluntly said he backed a "regime change" in Baghdad.

Blair was less direct, but echoed the president's sentiment: "It has always been our policy that Iraq would be a better place without Saddam Hussein," he said.

In his speech on Sunday, Blair will reiterate the message that action must be taken against Iraq.

"Leaving Iraq to develop weapons of mass destruction in flagrant breach of... United Nations Security Resolutions... is not an option," he will say.

Both the United States and Britain have stepped up the rhetoric against Iraq in recent weeks, fueling speculation that a military strike may be imminent. Both administrations continue to stress, however, that no decisions have been made.

Saddam has refused to allow UN weapons inspectors into Iraq since they pulled out in December 1998 on the eve of US-British air strikes meant to punish Baghdad for not cooperating with the experts.

Blair faces stiff resistance from his partners in the European Union and at home if he backs any US plan to launch a military offensive against Baghdad. *Reuters*

US President George W. Bush (right) and British Prime Minister Tony Blair at a joint press conference at Crawford High School in the town of Crawford, Texas, April 6. REUTERS

Pakistan ready to use nukes as last resort, says Musharraf

BERLIN—Pakistan would use nuclear weapons in its military stand-off with India over Kashmir but only if there was no other option, Pakistan's military ruler Pervez Musharraf told a German news magazine on Sunday.

"Using nuclear weapons would only be a last resort for us. We are negotiating responsibly. And I am optimistic and confident that we can defend ourselves using conventional weapons," the president told Der Spiegel in an interview.

Musharraf reiterated his stance that Pakistan would use nuclear weapons if its security or existence was threatened.

"Only if there is a threat of Pakistan being wiped off the map, then the pressure from my countrymen to use this option would be too great," said Musharraf, who seized power in Islamabad in a bloodless coup in October 1999.

Pakistan and India, both nuclear powers, are locked in a stand-off over the mountainous region of Kashmir and they have fought two of their three wars over the region since 1947.

A 740-km-long Line of Control or ceasefire line divides Kashmir between the two. India controls 45 percent of Kashmir, Pakistan just over a third and China the rest.

Musharraf described his decision to support the United States in its war against terrorism after the Sept. 11 suicide attacks on New York and Washington as "the most difficult political decision of my life."

"Chiefly because it meant giving the Americans fly-over rights and logistical support for the war in our neighbor Afghanistan. We have been disappointed by Washington so often in the past—including me personally. But in the end it was a matter of principle," he said.

Musharraf, who announced a crackdown on Islamic terrorists in January, said militant groups did not threaten the overall security of Pakistan but repeated his accusation that India was responsible for trying to destabilize his regime.

"Many attacks come from our powerful neighbor India.

Admittedly I cannot prove everything. But just recently we arrested three infiltrators near the Indian border," he said. *Reuters*

Red-faced Washington admits Bush blooper over China

BEIJING—The United States told China US President George W. Bush had made a mistake when he called Taiwan a country in a speech last week, the official Xinhua news agency reported on Sunday.

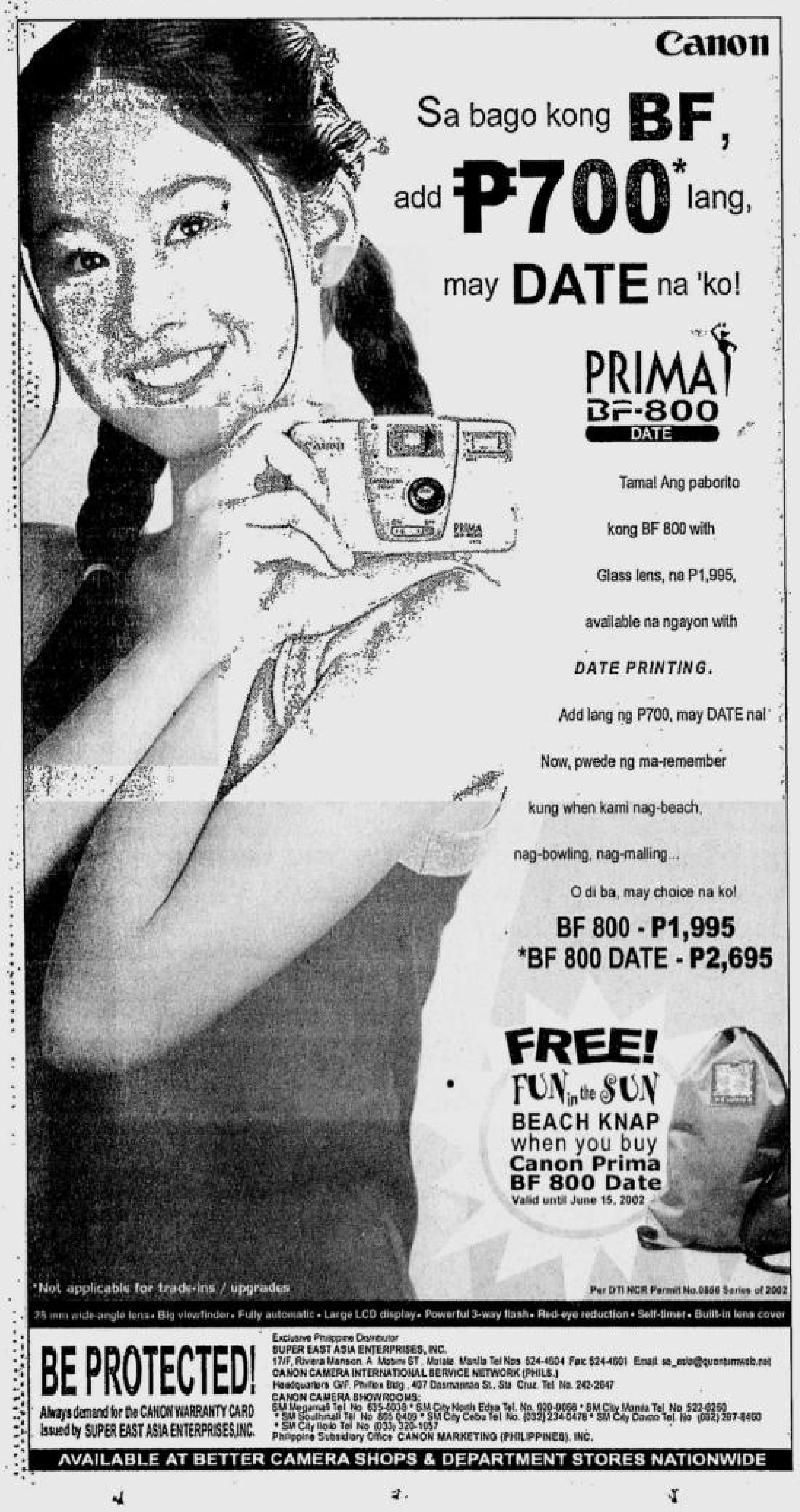
Washington told China the US government has not changed its Taiwan policy and said it would not refer to Taiwan in that way again, Xinhua quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesperson as saying.

Reports in Taiwanese newspapers on Friday said Bush called the island the "Republic of Taiwan" and a "country" in a speech to diplomats and business executives on Thursday.

Calling Taiwan a country would threaten to compromise a major pillar of Sino-US relations, which were set up in 1979 largely based on a US nod to the "one China" principle, which states that Taiwan is a part of China.

Beijing, which regards the island as a wayward province to be reunited with the mainland by force if necessary, asked for an explanation on Saturday of why Bush had referred to Taiwan as a country.

Taiwan's United Daily News quoted a US official as saying Bush's labeling Taiwan as a republic was a "slip of the tongue" and indicated no shift in US policy. *Reuters*



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China 'love' trader fantasizes about selling sex toys to Chinese

By Edwin Chan

WENZHOU, China—Wu Wei fantasizes about selling sex toys to the Chinese.

In a country where sex is best discussed in shadowy karaoke parlors or among close friends, Wu is packing retail shelves with sex toys, exhorting salespeople to interact with customers and cajoling local TV stations to run product demonstrations.

As president of Wenzhou Loves Health Products, he oversees a China-based operation that ranks among the world's top 10 makers of erotica from basic sex aids to adjustable inflatable dolls.

Yet, despite a global export empire stretching from Las Vegas to Amsterdam, the former store salesman has never quite managed to get a grip on his home market, and not for a lack of trying.

The trick, Wu says, is to get people to talk about sex.

"Demand in China may be much bigger than in our dreams right now," said Wu, 33. "China has a very conservative culture. But from our experience, Chinese today don't entirely reject sex products. I think if they need it, they'll buy it."

For now, Loves is content to export 70 percent of its products to mature markets like Europe and the United States.

Brandishing a giant pink sex toy, the unassuming executive explains the simple philosophy behind Loves' emergence from humble origins as a chain of "health protection product" stores to a global exporter assembling 10,000 sex toys a day.

"Our motto is 'Enhance your sexual prowess, enjoy sex to the fullest,'" Wu said as the heated instrument whirred to life.

"We try to fulfil our customers' desires. If they're happy, we're happy," he said.

More importantly, perhaps, was the funding from a silent Japanese partner who provided the product technology that differentiated Loves from its competitors and allowed it to win China's first license to make sex toys in 1995.

A CHORUS line of dolls with adjustable heads and life-like body parts graces the showroom of China's Wenzhou Loves Health Products in the eastern province of Zhejiang. The company ranks among the world's top 10 makers of erotica from basic sex aids to inflatable dolls complete with detachable body parts of varying shapes and sizes. REUTERS

But there's more to the business than satisfying needs. The crew-cut, bespectacled Wu admits it's hard to arouse interest in China, a society where kissing in public is frowned upon.

"Even our own salespeople are initially uncomfortable showing customers how to use our products," Wu laments.

Thwarted by Chinese laws banning mass media advertising of sex toys, Loves is training point-of-sales representatives to spread its message of love.

It has a deal with pharmaceutical chain Sinopharm allowing Loves to display wares in its outlets across China.

It has affixed large, shiny labels bearing office phone numbers to product packages, inviting both business inquiries and feedback from curious browsers.

"Customers are beginning to open up and ask embarrassing questions. Gradually our own salespeople will loosen up and be better at promoting our products," Wu said.

Loves' website www.chinasextoys.net carries row upon row of graphic photographs of its mind-boggling product range.

A chorus line of surprised-looking dolls with adjustable heads and other body parts cavorts along one wall of Love's spacious showroom on the outskirts of gritty Wenzhou—a private entrepreneur's haven in the eastern province of Zhejiang.

For the adventurous, Loves has rubber dinghies, beach balls with attachments and even an innocent, polka-dotted dairy cow.

"Well, some people..." Wu said sheepishly.

But the future is "Lovebots."

"We're headed in that direction, where a doll has body heat, life-like skin and can move and speak. Our initial experiments are successful, now it's just a matter of designing it," Wu said.

"We spend three to four million yuan ($362,500-$483,300) on research and development every year," he added.

The sheer abundance of aids excites mixed reactions—from disgust to fascination to ribald amusement—in Wenzhou's 100 or so "sex health product stores," mostly nestled in dim alleys. *Reuters*

UN moves to address elderly population bomb

MADRID—The predictions are almost cataclysmic: In 50 years, if trends continue, the number of people older than 60 will triple. Those 2 billion seniors would outnumber the world's youths.

Even before that, gains in longevity could bring a worldwide economic crisis, experts warn. With the population's proportion of taxpaying workers shrinking, national budgets could be overwhelmed in trying to provide retirement and health benefits for the elderly.

"By the mid-2020s, virtually the entire developed world will be one big Argentina unless some serious reforms are made," said Paul Hewitt of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, referring to the economic woes the South American country has suffered recently.

So, on Monday, representatives from 160 countries and international organizations begin a five-day United Nations conference in Madrid to grapple with the challenges posed by the graying of humanity.

The United Nations says older populations will significantly change patterns of "savings, investment and consumption, labor markets, pensions, taxation... health care, family composition and living arrangements, housing and migration."

In the developing world, the pace of aging is faster than in developed countries, giving the poorest societies less time to cope.

The ramifications could be serious as the elderly become an additional burden to the traditional scourges of poverty and disease.

Delegates at the Second World Assembly on Aging—the first was 20 years ago in Vienna, Austria—will try to agree on an action plan for addressing a host of aging-related issues: retirement age flexibility; living with dependency; elderly benefits; technology and the aging process; death matters such as euthanasia.

The meeting's chair, Spanish Labor and Social Affairs Minister Juan Carlos Aparicio, said Wednesday that "60 to 70 percent" of the plan had already been agreed on in preparatory negotiations.

Nevertheless, hundreds of nongovernmental organizations—from the American Association of Retired Persons to the Red Cross of Mongolia—are holding their own meetings over the weekend to push for firm commitments.

"We want to ensure there will be clear and comprehensive solutions, not just a magnificent closing ceremony and pledges that two or three years later everybody has forgotten," said Hector Maravall of the Spanish trade union CCOO.

One of the key issues is aging in developing countries. Now that family planning programs have lowered birth rates, populations are getting older faster than societies can cope, the United Nations says. With limited governmental means to provide for elderly care, the burden is expected to fall on already struggling families.

"In Africa, because of the AIDS epidemic, it is often the grandparents who are taking care of children," said Eduardo Rodriguez, president of the Spanish Confederation of Elderly Organizations and co-chair of the non-governmental meeting.

A projected drop in the ratio of working-age people to retirees from the current 9-to-1 to 4-to-1 by 2050 means taxes won't be able to cover as much of social security costs as they do now, the Center for Strategic and International Studies says. *AP*

Japan can easily go nuclear, says party leader

TOKYO—The leader of a small opposition party said Japan could easily develop nuclear weapons if its people feel threatened by China, newspapers reported Sunday.

"Making nuclear weapons is simple," Liberal Party leader Ichiro Ozawa reportedly said. "Japan could have several thousand nuclear warheads overnight if it wants."

Ozawa made the remarks during a speech Saturday in the southwestern city of Fukuoka, according to the reports, carried in the Asahi, Sankei and Nihon Keizai dailies.

All three papers are read nationally. They said that Ozawa was recounting remarks he had recently made to a visiting Chinese official.

"Japan probably has enough plutonium at nuclear plants for about three to four thousand warheads," Ozawa reportedly said. "If it comes to that, Japan won't lose militarily."

The background to such a scenario unfolding, he said, was China's increased military spending, which he described as part of its effort to become a superpower.

Balancing his comments, Ozawa also said that it is desirable for Japan and China to live together in peace and called for China to democratize.

Anti-nuclear sentiment is high in Japan, the only country to suffer nuclear attacks. Over 200,000 people died when the United States dropped two atomic bombs in the closing days of World War II.

Resource-poor Japan, however, relies on nuclear power as a major source of energy, fulfilling about a third of its electricity needs.

Ozawa, formerly a heavyweight in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, bolted the organization amid political realignments in the 1990s. *AP*

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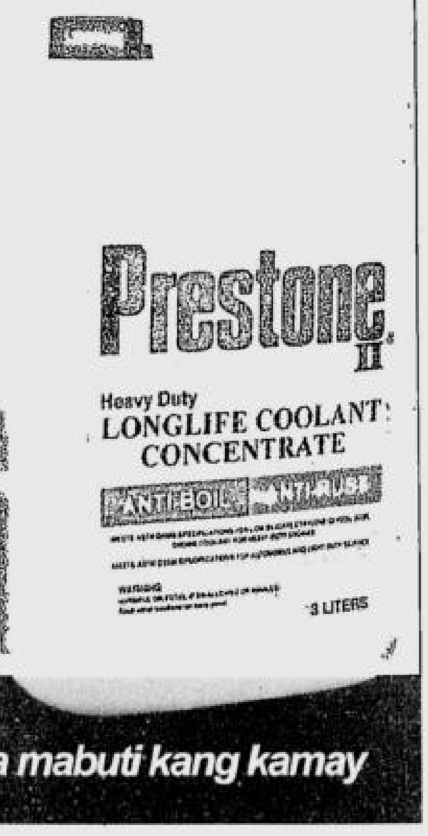

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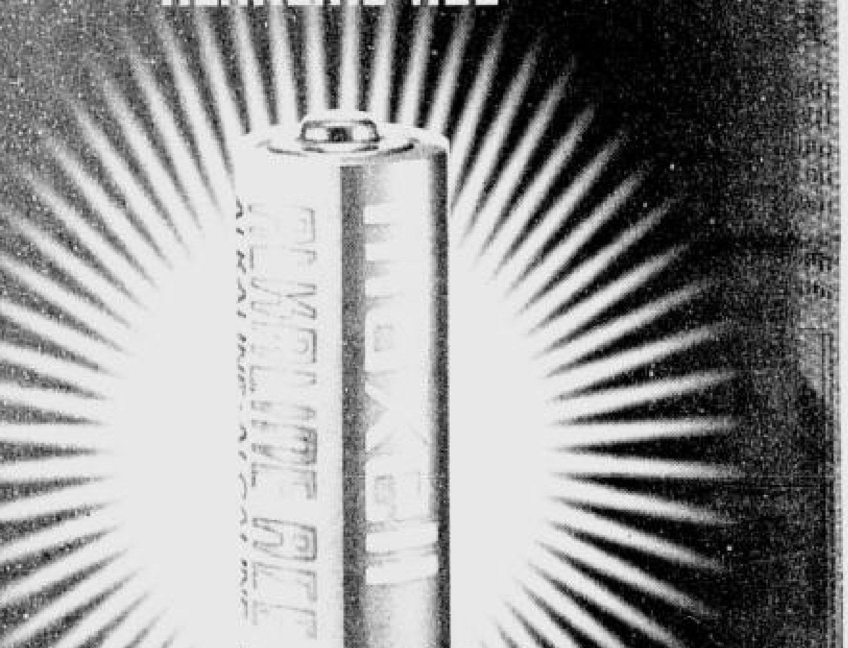

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21 held, 2 kg of shabu seized in GenSan raid

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—At least two kilos of shabu and six assorted handguns were seized by composite elements of the police, anti-narcotics agents and elements of the Mindanao Intelligence Group during simultaneous raids in the hideouts of suspected drug syndicate members here early morning Saturday.

At least 21 suspects—19 males and two females—were also apprehended when the raiding team swooped down on Purok Taliban, Barangay Buayan at around 4:30 a.m.

PNP Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza, who flew in from Camp Crame, told reporters here that the illegal drugs' value was estimated at P8 million, so far the biggest haul by the police here.

The raiding team also confiscated several rounds of assorted bullets, three camouflage uniforms, 21 lighters, two scissors, a samurai and a kris.

Armed with two search warrants issued by Judges Jose Bersales of the Municipal Trial Court in Cities Branch 2 and Antonio Lubao of the Regional Trial Court Branch 22, the raiding team swooped down on several houses in the area.

During the raid, some members of the raiding team, including Central Mindanao Police Director Senior Supt. Bartolome Baluyot, claimed that the team also recovered more than half a kilo of cocaine.

But during the presentation of the seized items to General Mendoza, the cocaine was nowhere to be found.

Insp. Delito Cawit, chief of the city's Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force, told the INQUIRER that there was about 70 grams of suspected cocaine seized during the raid.

"But we can't confirm if it's really cocaine unless we get hold of the result of the laboratory examination," Cawit said.

Cawit said that they put Purok Taliban under surveillance for three weeks before it was confirmed that it was being used as a dumping ground for illegal drugs.

Baluyot told reporters here that the illegal drugs dumped here were coming from Cotabato City.

He said Saturday's operation was the fourth after three previous raids conducted in Purok Taliban failed.

Baluyot said the area appears to be impenetrable because of resistance from suspected drug pushers.

In fact, Baluyot said, a brief firefight occurred between the members of the raiding team and the suspects yesterday although there was no casualty on either side.

"We just overpowered them as we brought Simba tanks and we deployed about a hundred troops to seal off the area," he said.

Charges of illegal possession of firearms and violation of the dangerous drugs act are being prepared against the suspects, who are now locked up inside Camp Fermin G. Lira Jr., he said.

Meanwhile, Mendoza urged civilians here to help the police in combating not only the proliferation of illegal drugs but other forms of criminality as well.

The PNP chief also vowed to crack the whip on any member of the police service found involved in illegal drugs or criminal activities.

"There will be no mercy for them," Mendoza warned. ***Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Clashes erupt anew between soldiers, NPA rebels

DAVAO CITY—Clashes between government troops and New People's Army guerrillas erupted anew in Marilog District here Saturday.

The firefight occurred as soldiers were still trying to figure out how to retrieve the bodies of their colleagues who were slain in a firefight with the rebels in Boston, Davao Oriental on Thursday evening.

Brig. Gen. Felipe Beroya, commander of the Army's 701st Brigade based in Compostela Valley, told radio station dxRP Radyo ng Bayan here that soldiers belonging to the 73rd Infantry Battalion under Col. Eduardo del Rosario were conducting a patrol 8:30 a.m. Saturday in Sitio Pigalungan, Barangay Malamba, Marilog, when they met about 15 NPA rebels under Commander Igor of the Pulang Bagani Command.

Beroya said during the firefight, one NPA rebel was killed and the military recovered an M-16 Armalite rifle.

He said the body of the slain rebel was later retrieved after the rebels retreated.

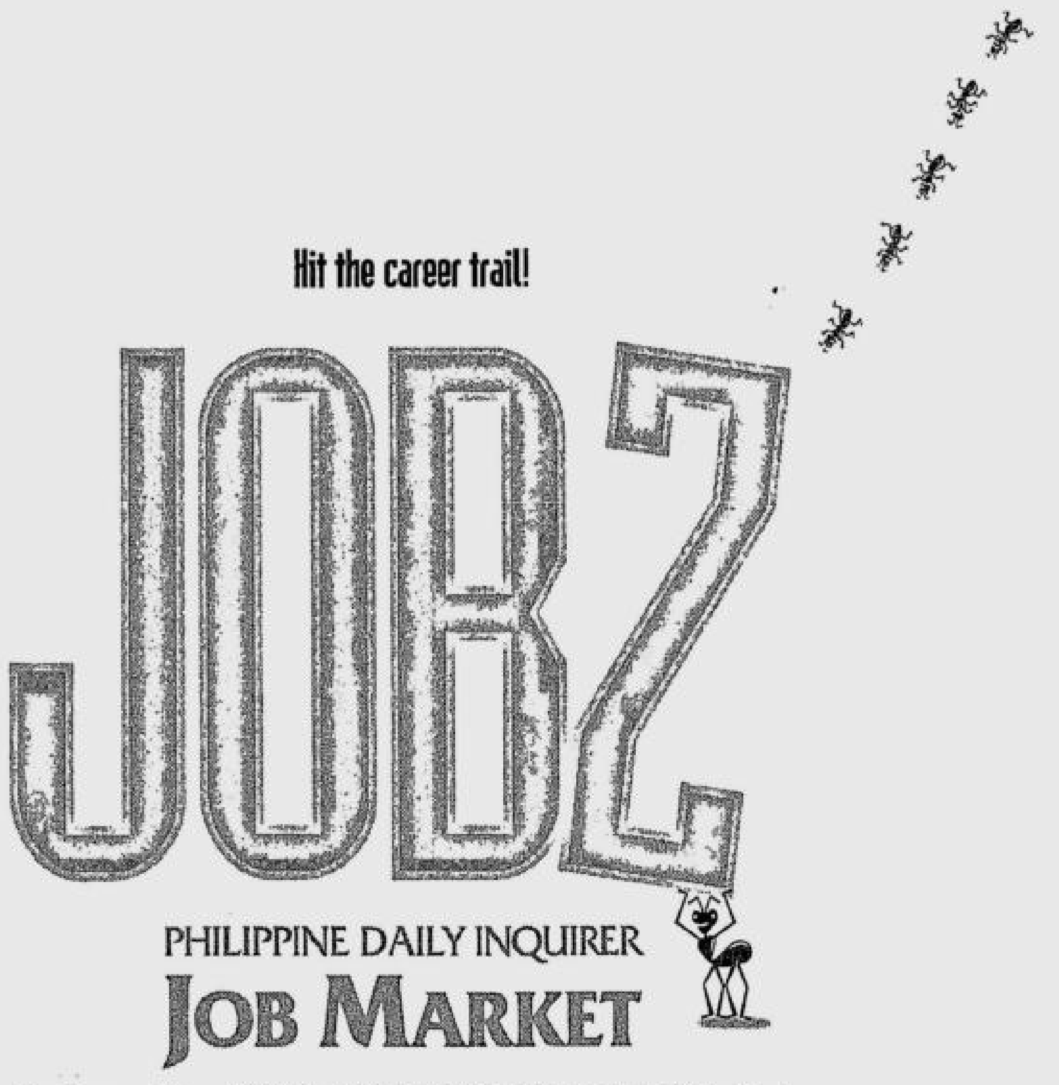
But in Boston, Davao Oriental soldiers were still devising means to retrieve the bodies of their five colleagues, who were killed on Thursday night on Km 55 in Barangay Sumilao.

Quoting Air Force reports, Beroya said the area where the soldiers were slain could not be reached because of "zero visibility."

However, Air Force personnel, backed by four MG250 attack helicopters and two Huey helicopters, managed to airlift the two Army men who were wounded in the encounter.

Beroya said the fighting ceased after the rebels withdrew.

Troopers, he said, were advancing to scour the hinterlands of Barangay Sumilao to locate the rebels led by Roberto Rosete of the NPA's Front 20. ***Anthony Allada and Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



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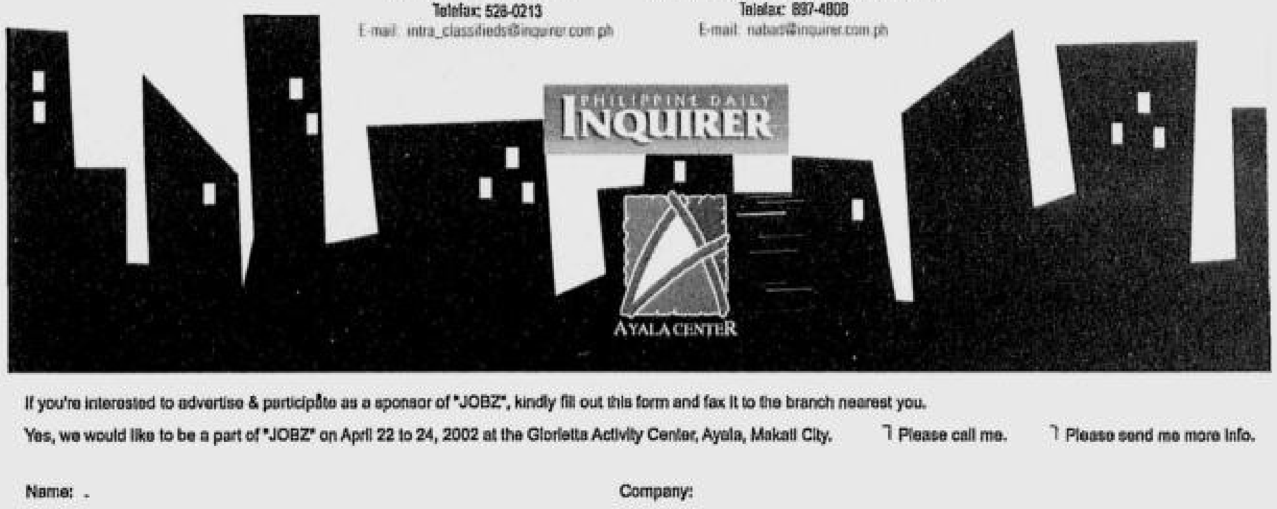

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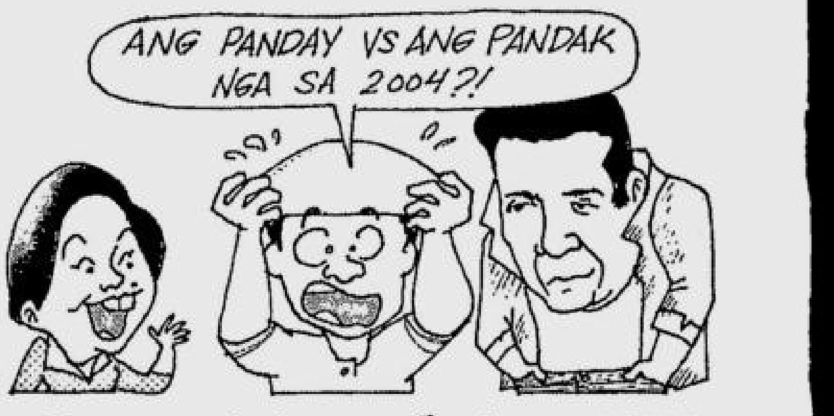
ANG PANDAY VS ANG PANDAK NGA SA 2004?!

Opposition claims FPJ may yet be candidate for president in 2004

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—It is not a joke. There is basis to believe in reports that the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) is considering plans to field action star Fernando Poe Jr. to be its standard bearer in the 2004 presidential elections.

"Based on informal consultations among party members, three names have emerged as probable candidates for president. One of them is Fernando Poe Jr.," House Minority Floor Leader Carlos Padilla told the INQUIRER.

But Padilla clarified that nothing was definite yet. "Nobody has yet submitted his name (for) the nomination," he said.

"But based on feedback from the opposition rank and file, *tatlo ang napupusuan* (three had been chosen). Whether they are interested or not is a different story," he added.

Aside from Poe, Padilla said two other names consistently came out during party assemblies as possible standard bearers. They were Senators Panfilo Lacson and Edgardo Angara.

Padilla was here last week as a guest of honor and speaker at the commencement exercises of the Northern Iloilo Polytechnic State College in Estancia town and the Batad Polytechnic College in Batad town.

Poe, Lacson and Angara are known to be close to deposed president Joseph Estrada.

Poe has been Estrada's close buddy since the time that they were young actors. Poe, who remains active in the movie world, is regarded as the "king of Philippine movies." Estrada stopped making movies when he became vice president in 1992.

Angara was Estrada's running mate in the 1998 presidential elections but lost to now President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. He also served as agriculture secretary and then executive secretary during Estrada's short-lived administration.

Lacson and Estrada had been close since Estrada was vice president. The two had worked together in the defunct Presidential Anti-Crime Commission, which was chaired by Estrada. A few months after assuming the presidency in July 1998, Estrada named Lacson as chief of the Philippine National Police.

Padilla said a big bloc of the opposition senators and congressmen is pushing for Poe's candidacy. But he clarified he was not one of them.

Sen. Ramon Revilla, a former actor, is among those seriously considering the idea of fielding Poe as standard bearer, he said.

Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico, also of the LDP, confirmed that he too had heard of talks about Poe's possible candidacy.

But, he added, this had never been a subject of any formal discussion among the LDP members. "As such, it remains an informal proposal, which may be taken up if somebody brings it up," he said.

Suplico, however, said he would rather see Angara leading the party in the 2004 elections than Poe.

Suplico said any LDP member who wants to run for president must go through the selection process.

Drug killings won't stop as 3 more slain in Digos

DAVAO CITY—Three persons were killed last week, as drug-related killings continue in nearby Digos City, police reported Saturday.

On Thursday, Romy Cueme, an alleged member of a vigilante group targeting suspected drug pushers, was gunned down inside a house in Muslim Village, First Crumb Street, Zone I, Digos City.

A report said two motorcycle-riding suspects shot Cueme, 33.

About four hours after Cueme was shot dead, one of the reported big-time drug pushers in Davao del Sur was shot dead in front of the Guihing barangay hall in Hagonoy town.

Rene Baltazar, alias Ike, a resident of White House, Digos City was standing near the barangay hall when several gunmen fired at him without warning.

On Monday evening, Abdul Naser Diamad, alias Junjun, 22, was killed by motorcycle-riding gunmen.

Diamad, who was previously arrested for drug pushing, was leaving his house when the suspects attacked.

The new figures in drug-related killings have reached 30 since last year, but no suspect has ever been arrested.

Supt. Samuel Navaja, Davao del Sur police director, said witnesses are either unwilling to testify or are too scared to cooperate with investigators. ***Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Luxury cigarettes seized in Ilocos town

CABUGAO, Ilocos Sur—Following a tip from villagers, officials here seized P13.7 million worth of imported luxury cigarettes in Barangay Namruangan on Maundy Thursday.

Mayor Diocaesar Suero, who was having his Holy Week break, led the police in confiscating 551 boxes of Rothmans 555 cigarettes.

He said 259 other boxes worth P6.5 million were believed to have been thrown into the sea or loaded into a waiting vessel when the suspects saw the police coming.

Police said the cigarettes were part of goods that were hijacked in Manila last February.

Thirteen men were arrested and now detained at the municipal jail here.

They were identified as Alexter Santos of San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte; Ruben Mauricio, Rolando Pablo, William Buyutan, Alden Nieto, Rufino Macadangdang Jr., Roberto Orlanda Sr., Robert Orlanda Jr. and Edgar Mayor, all of Laoag City; Arnie Turla and Albert Lundang, both of Tarlac; Richard Sumiwan of Dipolog City, and Aron Jomel de Guzman of Quezon City.

In a sworn statement, Michael Ong of Paco, Manila, said he was the caretaker of the confiscated cigarettes owned by one Ang Tiong Pien of China.

Police impounded two cargo trucks used to transport the goods.

Police records showed that on Feb. 12, 860 boxes of Rothmans 555 were unloaded at the Manila South Harbor. The cigarettes were about to be transported in two cargo trucks to the Poro International Port in La Union when seven men intercepted these in Quezon City.

One of the suspects tried to sell 50 boxes but customs and police officials arrested him. He told the authorities that the remaining 810 boxes were kept in Paco, Manila.

On March 2, customs and police raided the place but found nothing because the cigarettes had been transferred to Currimao, Ilocos Norte. ***Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.
source: pagasa

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI35° Lo 24°
Baguio	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HI 26° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HI 36° Lo 21°
Laoag	Clear to Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 23°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 35° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 25°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 22°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	HI 34° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/04/08/02

ROUNDUP

Project put on hold

TAGBILARAN CITY—The city government gave in to the call of environmentalists here to first conduct a feasibility study and hold public consultations before proceeding with the Tagbilaran Bay Reclamation Project (TBRP). The new requirements were contained in a revised memorandum of agreement between the city government and the Public Estates Authority. It took out a provision that drew strong criticism from the Concerned Coalition Against Rehabilitation, which would have bound the parties to "defend the project against any opposition, negative campaign and the like." The new draft agreement prepared by the city legal office instead said both parties would "facilitate the conduct of public consultations as part of the process of securing the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC)."

Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

More geothermal power

BACOLOD CITY—The seventh well drilled by the Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. in Sitio Pataan, Barangay Mailum, Murcia has a capacity for six megawatts, bringing to 22 megawatts the amount of geothermal power already tapped in the area. The PNOC-EDC, which is now drilling an eighth well, aims to generate 40 megawatts for its geothermal power plant that is expected to cost more than P4 billion and be operational in 2004. Bidding for the construction of the plant will be held in the middle of this year and construction is expected to start at the end of 2002, said Mila Araña, PNOC-EDC community relations officer.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

DENR men suspended

BACOLOD CITY—Three environment employees in Negros Occidental were suspended and charged with issuing alleged irregular certificates that allowed the release of over 180 sacks of charcoal that were seized in February. Foresters Renato Sabinian and Rally Cagayanan and community environment office employee Juanito Flores face administrative charges for gross neglect of duty and other charges to be filed by Raoul Geollegue, Department of Environment and Natural Resources director for Western Visayas.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

2 die in ambulance crash

TUGUEGARAO CITY—An official of the Department of Health in Cagayan Valley and a driver were killed when the ambulance they were riding in hit a parked vehicle in San Jose City on Saturday. Police have identified only one of the fatalities. He was Dr. Cirilo Pintucan, chief of the regional DOH's rescue team. Dr. Eriberto Policar, regional DOH chief, said Pintucan accompanied two accident victims to a hospital in Metro Manila and met the accident while on his way back to Tuguegarao City.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Army claims killing 2 rebs

LUPON, Davao Oriental—The military claimed it killed at least two New People's Army (NPA) rebels and wounded six others when government soldiers raided the communist group's regional plenum in Sitio Tagtugoc in Barangay Maragatas here on March 30. Capt. Marion Candava, chief of the Philippine Army's 4th Special Forces Company, told the INQUIRER that at least 100 government troopers fired mortar shells at the gathering of some 200 NPA rebels who came from the different provinces of Southern Mindanao. Candava said two unidentified rebels were left dead after a two-hour firefight. He said six other rebels were reportedly wounded. Candava said a day before they staged the attack, the communist rebels held a mass wedding ceremony in the area. "We decided not to attack the rebels during their mass wedding ceremony because hundreds of civilians who attended the event might get hurt. Besides, attacking them during wedding ceremonies is a violation of the rules of engagement," he said. But the NPA's Willie Zapanta Command said the government troopers attacked them during the mass wedding. The NPA also denied the military's claim that two of its members were killed in the attack. "Not even one of our fighters was wounded. And we were able to fight back wounding some government soldiers," an NPA spokesperson said. Candava said the rebels brought with them their dead comrades as they retreated to neighboring Compostela Valley province.

Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

War on smut declared

DAVAO CITY—Councilors are preparing a case of injunction against publishers of "pornographic" magazines being sold in the city. The problem, however, is that the councilors have to find the publishers first. Councilor Leonardo Avila III, chair of the council committee on women and children, said because no one wants to go after the publishers, the council will pave the way for the smut publishers' prosecution. "It's now the right time to test if our laws really have teeth," he said. He was referring to the magazines Explosive Males, Boys 2 Men and Studio 69. Explosive Males, which sells for P120, is published by a certain Dennis Ongtangco. Its editorial box, however, does not have a mailing address. The magazine Boys 2 Men, priced at P180 each, is published in Bangkok, Thailand. Studio 69, a magazine for men, also does not have a mailing address or a publisher. "These (magazines) are being sold on the sidewalks. The vendors just hide them but you can ask for them and they will sell it to you," he said. Avila said they will also go after tabloid newspapers that carry photographs of "scantily-clad women and in various state of undressing."

Joel Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

East Visayas power rates go down by 7¢

BURAUEN, Leyte—While Metro Manila residents are railing over a projected increase in their electric rates, Eastern Visayans are heaving a sigh of relief because their power expenses will be reduced by at least seven centavos per kilowatt-hour starting this month.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said the reduction of the power rates in Eastern Visayas was due mainly to the increased usage by the National Power Corp. (Napocor) of its geothermal power facility in Tongonan, Leyte and the stability of the peso-dollar exchange rate.

The reduction will mean that from the current P3.43 per kilowatt-hour rate that the Napocor pegged for the Leyte-Samar grid, the Napocor will now only charge a rate of P3.37 per kwh.

"The power rate reduction in the Leyte-Samar grid is the lowest in the country next to Mindanao," Perez said during a press conference held in this town on Wednesday.

The power rate reduction is the second for the region this year. Last February, the Napocor had reduced its Leyte-Samar power rates from P3.50/kwh to P3.43/kwh.

Perez added that the latest round of power rate reduction would mean a P9-saving for people in the region with an average consumption of 100 kilowatts per month.

If the usage at the Tongonan geothermal plant continues to increase, this means additional power rate reduction, according to Perez.

This can only be achieved, he added, if the region continues to sell energy to its neighboring island provinces like Cebu, Bohol, Negros and those in Mindanao.

"What we (could do) is sell more geothermal power from Leyte. The more energy we sell from the Tongonan geothermal (site), the more we could lower the power rates in the Leyte-Samar grid," he added.

Perez said the National Transmission Co., which now manages the Napocor, is fast tracking an inter-island connection project.

Included in the inter-island connection are the Leyte-Samar-Cebu, Leyte-Bohol, Leyte-Negros, and Leyte-Mindanao grids.

Joey Gabieta and Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau

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NBI uncovers pilferage of mail at post office in Angeles City area

By Jun Malig
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation has uncovered incidents of mail pilferage in a post office here but the NBI's civilian agent who conducted the surveillance operation against the erring postmen now fears for his life as he was already identified by his co-workers.

The NBI agent, a long-time postal worker in the office, caught on video and still cameras some postmen and personnel of the Balibago post office allegedly trying to identify envelopes that have cash or checks inside them.

An intelligence report submitted by the agent to lawyer Anthony Liongson, NBI regional director, showed that some postal employees here bring home and open mails that contain cash or checks a day before they are delivered.

The report also cited irregularities in the post office, among them the failure to deliver mail with cash or checks within the required period and the recycling of used stamps.

NBI agents went to the post office on Tuesday but three of the four suspect postmen had already left.

The fourth suspect, however, yielded no mail in his possession when he was bodily searched.

The NBI's civilian agent said he conducted the video surveillance from March 1 to 15 this year.

Pilferage and theft of mail contents have been allegedly going on for several years now, he said.

Most of the victims, according to the agent, are American, Australian and European expatriates or their families who live in this city. He said many foreigners still prefer to send cash and checks through the mail although the Philippine Postal Corp. (Philpost) is discouraging this practice.

The agent claimed that the suspects identify envelopes that contain cash or checks by "massaging" or carefully passing them between their fingers. He said the suspects are also very skillful in opening envelopes without damaging them.

DENNIS SABANGAN

TEXTURES
Durians and babies have nearly nothing in common, especially when it comes to skin texture, but both bring joy to this fruit vendor in Sulu.

1,500 co-ops to merge as a big group

BACOLOD CITY—Some 1,500 cooperatives nationwide are moving toward merger and consolidation under the leadership of the National Confederation of Cooperatives (Natcco).

The affiliate cooperatives have a combined membership of over 1.2 million.

A common logo will be launched in a grand convention scheduled in May in Cebu City, where the cooperative federation, said to be the largest in the country, was born 25 years ago.

In line with the consolidation, the network's nine regional development centers started operating early this year as Natcco secretariats opened in Northern Luzon, Cagayan Valley, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Visayas and Mindanao regions. The 30-year-old Visayas Cooperative Development Center (Victo) is now Natcco-Visayas.

Other cooperative institutions under the Natcco flagship are: The Cooperative Education Development Center Inc., in education; Coop Life Mutual Benefit Services Association (Climbs), in insurance; and the National Market Vendors Service Cooperative (Namvesco), in micro-retailing.

Guillermo Cua, Natcco chief executive officer, said the initiative, dubbed "One Name, One Logo, One Brand," is an effort to catch up with international developments in the cooperative movement that focus on specialization and consolidation in the later part of the last century.

Following a five-year plan, Natcco has led its affiliates, mostly savings and loans cooperatives, toward specialization, capacity building and standardization in financial intermediation. International partners like the Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA), Development International Desjardin (DID), the Rabobank Foundation and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) have provided financial and technical support.

"It has taken almost as long to convince 1,485 primary affiliates to set aside their respective identities and adopt the common logo and name," Cua said.

CLOGGED ARTERIES

'Bejo' plans heart bypass in warrant's wake

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The day the Sandiganbayan disclosed that a warrant has been issued for his arrest, city Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez announced plans to undergo heart surgery.

Romualdez said he would be out of the city for at least six months.

"I will temporarily leave my office to Vice Mayor Edwin Chua as I will undergo a heart surgery operation and I just hope that by the time I come back, . . . the city's P350 million fund (will be intact)," the mayor said partly in jest as he referred to the city government budget for this year.

According to him, four of his heart's arteries are clogged and need to be operated on.

The mayor, however, declined to disclose more information about his impending heart surgery or where it will be performed.

He also declined to talk about his graft case.

On Thursday, the anti-graft court disclosed that a warrant of arrest against the younger brother of former first lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos has been issued in connection with his alleged illegal takeover of the Bataan Shipyard and Engineering Co. (Baseco).

City administrator Federico Triste said the 55-year-old mayor left for Manila early Friday.

"He is preparing for his impending heart surgery, which I believe is his first major operation," he told the INQUIRER.

Triste immediately dispelled rumors that the heart by-pass operation is just a ploy to evade arrest by the sheriffs of the Sandiganbayan.

"I am denying that categorically. The mayor informed us about the operation before that came out in the INQUIRER. He told about that to us during the Holy Week," he said.

"He is not evading (arrest) or anything. The case is bailable anyway," Triste said.

The city administrator also said Romualdez was even surprised that a warrant of arrest was issued against him.

"His immediate reaction was of surprise rather than worry. He was not aware of it," he said, adding that he learned of the warrant of arrest through newspapers.

However, Triste said, the moment Romualdez's lawyers receive a copy of the warrant of arrest, they will immediately post bail for him.

"We have yet to receive a copy of the warrant of arrest. But we are now preparing for his bail. It is bailable. And what I have gathered is that the bail amounts to only P30,000," he said.

Triste also said the mayor is thinking of having the operation either here in the Philippines or in the United States.

"But the mayor prefers to be operated here in the country. He is thinking more of the post-operation phase. If he will stay here, many of his relatives could attend to him," he said.

Triste said among the hospitals that Romualdez was considering for his heart operation are the St. Luke's Medical Center, the Makati Medical Center and the Heart Center, the last built by his elder sister during the Marcos regime.

Pampanga officials to pursue suit over poisoning

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga—Local officials said they were not dropping plans to file a suit for damages against the Alaska Milk Corp. even as the Bureau of Food and Drugs declared unspoiled the milk packs that were suspected to have downed some 200 pupils in Minalin town on March 11.

"It's not conclusive," said Benalfre Galang, provincial administrator, of the BFAD findings.

He did not hint of manipulations of laboratory results but said "an expert's opinion must be sought."

Mayor Edgar Flores, also unconvinced of BFAD's findings, proposed the same move.

Board Member Nestor Tolentino also maintained a skeptical position and scheduled on April 11 a public hearing on the poisoning.

The officials said they were not furnished a copy of the bureau's microbiology laboratory report dated March 21. They said they based their comments on news reports that published the findings.

A BFAD microbiology laboratory report prepared by Carmina Parce, BFAD microbiologist, said tests did not find bacterial growth in the samples of chocolate milk submitted to them by the office of Flores.

Galang admitted that the findings "weakened" the bid to seek redress for the victims but said the provincial government "still has a cause of action to take against the company."

CHILDREN at a Pampanga hospital after drinking donated milk.

KILLKILL

Alaska was "still not yet off the hook," he said, adding that the firm has "a social responsibility over those who got sick."

He said Alaska had not given financial assistance to the victims.

AMC officials had maintained that its products for the Department of Education's Project School Milk had always been of the "best quality."

Santiago Polido, AMC director for corporate affairs, said the BFAD result validated the integrity of the chocolate milk products served to the schoolchildren.

He said AMC believed that "it is time to put the incident behind us."

"The Minalin incident was really unfortunate, and we understand how the parents of the schoolchildren, the school officials, and even the local government officials must have felt when the incident happened," he said. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Start of year's drought destroys 670 hectares of Pangasinan farms

By Yolanda Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—The onslaught of drought has destroyed at least 670 hectares of rice farms in 33 towns in Pangasinan province, reports from the office of the provincial agriculturist showed.

Jose Almendares, provincial agriculturist, said reports gathered by his office indicated that about 4,000 hectares of rice farms have 20 to 70 percent chances of recovering from the effects of the drought if irrigation would be made available to them on time.

But he said these chances depend on where these farms are located.

The rice seeds in these areas are already 70-90 days old or are in the flowering stage and could be harvested in a month's time, he said.

"This is why the provincial government, the Department of Agriculture and the National Irrigation Administration are rushing the rehabilitation of communal irrigation canals," Almendares said.

At least 30,000 hectares of land were planted with rice during the second cropping season in the province.

To help farmers cope with the drought, Gov. Victor Agbayani has launched the Ugnayan sa Patubig, a program that tasks the provincial government, the DA and the NIA to rehabilitate their respective irrigation facilities.

The DA's responsibility lies on small water impounding projects and diversion dams that usually irrigate farms of up to five hectares.

The NIA focuses on irrigation system canals that supply water to 100 to 300 hectares of farms while the provincial government has the task of rehabilitating communal irrigation systems that irrigate 50 to 150 hectares of farms.

The provincial government has allocated P25 million for the rehabilitation project while the DA and NIA have allocated P12 million and P13 million, respectively.

Almendares said the provincial government is also building shallow tube wells in areas that are not reached by irrigation canals.

"We will build at least 50 wells this summer," he said.

Triumph of sex assault victim inspires another to sue De Oro vice mayor

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Sexual harassment victim Juliet Yee's triumph against her attacker has inspired another victim here to come out in the open.

Leah Daba, 27, a daughter of Councilor Annie Daba, accused Vice Mayor John Elizaga of sexually assaulting her.

But unlike Yee, who immediately charged former city health officer Rico Jacutin, Daba said she did not consider filing charges when the assault happened last year.

Yee won in her case against Jacutin on March 6.

Elizaga declined an INQUIRER interview, but his lawyer, Jose Alexander Pallugna, said the allegations were highly anomalous.

He said it was impossible for his client to commit such an act especially in an office where people just come and go.

"Leah doesn't possess an irresistible beauty for the vice mayor to do such (an) act," Pallugna said.

He said he also found it puzzling why it took so long for Daba to come out.

"Why didn't she file it the day it happened? Why (file it) this late?" Pallugna said.

Daba said the fear of embarrassing her family, especially her mother, who is one of the city's prominent persons, held her back.

"I really wanted to file the case last year but I decided to defer it because I don't want to ruin my mother's career (as a politician)," she said.

Elizaga is Councilor Daba's partymate. They belong to Mayor Vicente Emano's Padayon Pilipino Party.

In an affidavit she furnished the city council, Daba said that on March 1, 2001, Elizaga ordered her temporary transfer from the Cagayan de Oro River Development Authority to his office.

Upon seeing her at the vice mayor's office, Daba said Elizaga immediately sent her secretary on an errand.

Shortly after the secretary left the office, Daba said the vice mayor began asking her intimate questions, to which she replied: "You are so sexually offensive."

She said she stood up and tried to reach for the door, but Elizaga blocked her path, grabbed her and forced a kiss on her cheek.

Stunned, Daba said she stood frozen for several minutes, and when she regained composure, she rushed to the toilet.

When she returned to work in the afternoon, again Elizaga called her into the office.

The vice mayor then allegedly told her: *"Basin imo na ko'ng gisumbong sa imong mama ha? Wala ta pa baya ka gilips to lips. Aping pa lang baya 'to* (You might have told your mama already. I did not kiss you on the lips. It was only in the cheeks)."

That was the last time she showed up at the vice mayor's office.

Dale Bryan Mordeno, lawyer for Daba, said Elizaga faces at least three cases before the Ombudsman.

Mordeno said aside from the sexual harassment charges, Elizaga will also be facing charges of violation of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards of a Public Official and crime against chastity under the Revised Penal Code. ***Grace Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

ELIZAGA

Anti-Israel outrage rises

From page A1

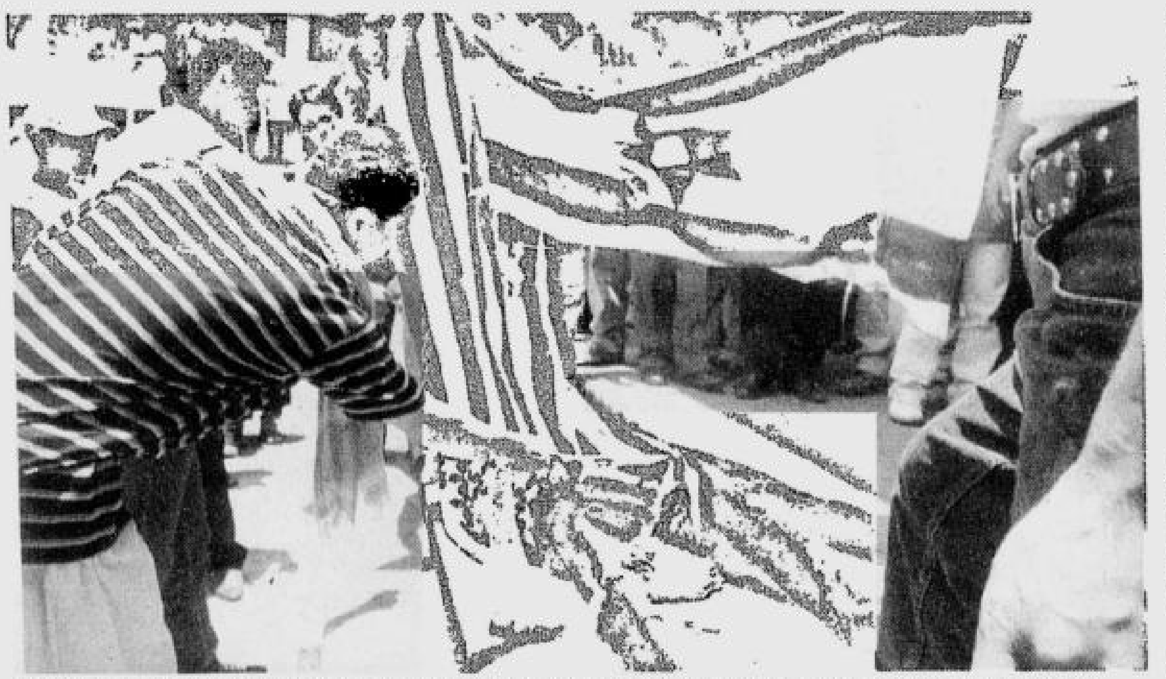
City Hall carrying signs that read "Sharon Hitler."

Similar protests were held Friday and Saturday in Florida, Ohio, New Jersey and California.

"They're killing children, women, they're killing everybody," Mahmoud Eltalla, 42, a gas station owner born in the Gaza Strip, said in a protest in Miami Beach. "What the Nazis did to them, they're doing to us right now."

International pressure has been growing on Israel to end its operation in the West Bank, launched on March 29 after a series of suicide attacks.

Israel troops have swept into six Palestinian towns, battling gunmen and arresting hundreds, as well as confining Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to his offices.



MILITANTS burn the American and Israeli flags to show their indignation over Israel's military blitz through Palestinian cities during the "Caravan for Peace" in Cagayan de Oro and Marawi cities.

BUTCH D. ENERIO/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Bush calls up Sharon

Israel blitzed the West Bank on Saturday in the bloodiest day of its military offensive, with the explosive violence forcing Washington to intensify its efforts to end the deadly campaign.

Dozens of Palestinians and five Israeli soldiers were reported killed in the fierce fighting Saturday.

But hours after brushing off US President George W. Bush's call for Israel to call off its operation, Israel appeared to cede ground after Bush delivered a firm message to Sharon by phone.

In the 20-minute call from his Texas ranch, Bush told the prime minister that he meant what he said: That Israel needed to "withdraw without delay," said an anonymous US official.

And in contrast to comments by an aide to the prime minister who vowed Saturday to carry on and "finish the job" in the West Bank, Sharon told Bush, "Israel will do all it can to bring a quick end to Operation Defensive Wall."

Defensive Wall is the name of Israel's nine-day blitz on major Palestinian towns.

The prime minister's office added: "Sharon said he understands the president's concern to finish the operation quickly."

Before Bush's call, the Palestinians accused the White House of giving Sharon leeway to crush the remains of Arafat's self-rule government, saying refusal to hand Israel a deadline to withdraw its troops meant giving them a green light for killing instead.

In particular, the Palestinians were responding to Bush's joint press conference in Texas with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, where the US President announced the two leaders had agreed that Israel must pull out "without delay" from the West Bank cities.

The Palestinians were also angered by the fact that US Secretary of State Colin Powell, taking off on a foreign tour Sunday to address the Middle East crisis, was unlikely to reach Israel until Friday after stops expected in Spain, Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Second front

Meanwhile, fresh cross-border attacks on Israeli positions from south Lebanon underscored fears that a second front was opening. Israel struck back quickly with air raids. The radical Hamas and other militant groups vowed to step up anti-Israeli attacks.

In the West Bank, fierce fighting erupted as Palestinian militants and security forces battled Israeli troops pushing forward for a ninth day to solidify their grip in what Israel says is a bid to stop terror attacks.

The heaviest battles were reported from Nablus and Jenin, and in particular the Jenin refugee camp known as a stronghold for Palestinian suicide bombers and gunmen.

Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo said there were 30 reported dead in one area, and that the death toll could be as high as 100 in the refugee camp alone. "Today is a day of massacres in Jenin," he said.

The Palestinians said dozens of wounded lay bloodied in the streets, unable to get help because the Israelis had blocked ambulances, and asked world leaders to intervene. "Every hour counts," Rabbo said.

Untamed resistance

The intense combat showed Israel had not yet tamed Palestinian resistance in the two key towns of the northern West Bank, despite a barrage of tank and helicopter gunfire which residents said left houses in ruins.

Israeli tanks also rocked Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah, where he has been penned in by the Israeli army since the Israeli offensive began on March 29. Three bodyguards were wounded and one arrested but Arafat was unhurt, Palestinian sources said.

There was no way to independently verify the soaring death toll, which was put at more than 50 Palestinians, including five children, and five Israeli soldiers by late evening. Combat areas are blocked off by Israel.

There was also violence in the Gaza Strip, which along with the West Bank towns of Jericho and divided Hebron has so far escaped massive Israeli incursion.

Residents said troops and tanks also rolled into more Palestinian areas of the West Bank, Qabatiya in the north and Yatta to the south, as they tried to consolidate their grip on land given to the Palestinians under peace deals in the 1990s.

"We are currently witnessing a massacre similar to that of Sabra and Shatila," Rabbo said, evoking one of the blackest days in Arab memory, and one indelibly linked to Sharon.

Between 800 and 2,000 Palestinians were slain in the two refugee camps in Lebanon during Israel's catastrophic 1982 invasion, when Sharon was Israel's defense minister.

The Arab League, gathered in Cairo to address the crisis, said it would push for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council and declared its support for the armed uprising as "legitimate resistance" to occupation.

The Israeli army says it has seized large quantities of bombs and other weapons in its push through the West Bank, launched two days after a suicide bomber killed 26 people on the Jewish Passover holiday.

Israel says it has arrested around 1,500 Palestinians and announced Friday it was reopening a detention camp in the Negev desert used in the first Palestinian uprising, or intifada.

An armed standoff between Israeli troops and around 200 Palestinian gunmen bunkered inside Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, one of the holiest sites in Christendom, reached its fifth day Saturday.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, a dove who has frequently clashed with Sharon over how to handle the conflict, told Israeli radio that the assault should be ended "quickly" and political negotiations resumed. *AP, AFP*

Regime consolidation primary factor . . .

From page A1

eral De los Santos upon his retirement that "it will not be a popular decision."

"It will create disenchantment. There will be low morale," he said.

The remarks have revived rumors of military unrest over promotions on the senior generals' level. It includes coup conspiracies, which are a symptom of the pernicious infection of military interventionism in politics that has been running in the veins of the military since its mutiny that sparked the popular uprising that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986.

Generals Villanueva and De Los Santos were promoted by the President in a reshuffle following the appointment as defense secretary of Gen. Angelo Reyes, the Armed Forces chief of staff who withdrew military support from the Estrada administration on Jan. 19, 2001.

These appointments were a function of Ms Macapagal's consolidation of support in the Armed Forces against the backdrop of plots to destabilize her government, including the May 1, 2001, urban poor's rebellion which was incited by deposed President Joseph Estrada and his political allies.

Line of succession

The appointment of the next chief of staff is a continuation of the process of consolidation and alliance building. It will be determined by the consideration of which senior general in the line of succession would best ensure regime stability and loyalty.

In this context, Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor (PMA Class 1969), the Air Force commander, who is due to retire on Sept. 12, 2002; and Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling (PMA Class 1969), vice chief of staff, have an outside chance to succeed Villanueva.

This is not simply a question of favoring PMA Class 1970 over Class 1969. Class is a minor factor.

Ms Macapagal is uneasy with both Generals Defensor and Camiling. Both are associated with attempts by some senior generals on Jan. 19 and 20, 2001 to overturn General Reyes' decision to align the military chain of command behind the defection from the Estrada regime and switch loyalty to the constitutional successor, then Vice President Macapagal.

Unlike De los Santos, Villanueva did not complain about his retirement although he would have retained his post had the President extended his tour of duty. Villanueva is an ally of Secretary Reyes, who is part of the Cabinet triumvirate that forms the principal legs of the Macapagal administration. The two others are Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo and Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

At this point, I wish to emphasize that this article is not an expression of preference for who will be the next chief of staff. That is not my concern. Rather, this essay seeks to explain the importance of regime consolidation as the primary factor in senior military promotions.

'Deep selection'

As pointed out by senior generals themselves, there is no issue over the President's power and authority to appoint the military chief, even though it would mean using "deep selection" or extension of military tour of duty of retiring generals.

Senior military appointments and promotions have always been a source of disgruntlement among generals in line and aspiring for promotion. Previous presidents, without exception, had ignored the lineal seniority queue to install as military chief generals who have their confidence.

One good example is the appointment by President Ferdinand Marcos of his former bodyguard and driver, Gen. Fabian Ver, as chief of staff over such outstanding career generals as Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, the long-time head of the defunct Philippine Constabulary.

The list of queue jumping can be lengthy. My argument is that while General De los Santos' warning can cause disgruntlement, given that jumping the queue bottles up the promotion chances of senior generals on the lineal list, extension is not a sufficient cause for serious moves inside the military to foment coup plots against the Macapagal regime.

Abu Sayyaf test

According to inside military sources, Cimatu is backed by Secretary Reyes. Cimatu now holds a key post as Southern Command chief, where the success—or failure—of the campaign to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf terrorist threat is being tested.

The President's commitment to actively back US President George W. Bush's campaign to combat international terrorism and support for the Balikatan 02-1 RP-US military exercises have opened the window for the flow of US military and economic assistance to the Philippines.

This policy has bought increased military loyalty to the government. The aid dividends have made the military happy as it has been given new resources not only to enhance its capability to fight domestic rebellions but also to promote its modernization program.

One may argue that the President's efforts to consolidate her alliances inside the Armed Forces make her move dependent on the loyalty of the military and give them a powerful influence in the policies, especially on defense and internal security, of the administration.

Rewards system

It is also apparent that the promotions so far of senior generals in both the AFP and in the Philippine National Police have been partly determined by distributing rewards to generals who helped her in her accession to the presidency. Examples are Secretary Reyes, General Villanueva and Gen. Leandro Mendoza, the PNP chief whose tour of duty has been extended for a few months.

It is a symptom of the still fragile basis of regime stability and the President's own insecurity over continuing attempts to unsettle her regime, whose legitimacy is constantly challenged, that promotions to senior military and police positions are partly based on rewards to loyal officers, shoving to the sidelines generals with doubtful loyalty.

While General De los Santos' warning may have some basis in fact, the disgruntlement cannot generate widespread military unrest on a scale that plagued the Estrada regime. That unrest was fueled by deep and wide military discontent, shared by the civilian sector, over more serious faults of the Estrada regime, among which are widespread corruption, economic incompetence and the total loss of domestic and international confidence in the administration.

No txt 4 a coz

From page A1

school *baon* (allowance). And they will also have a better chance of finishing school.

Making that possible are at least 40 employees of the National Economic and Development Authority in Central Luzon.

To pool the P400 monthly allowance for each girl, each Neda worker started giving up one text message daily to contribute P20 or more every month.

Teng Mendoza, a Neda researcher, said he and his colleagues are able to accumulate savings by skipping the hobby of sending jokes through text messaging.

He said sending fewer text messages enables them to pay less on bills or postpone the buying of call and text cards.

Mendoza said he had saved at least one call and text card worth P300 or equivalent to 15 months of donations to the poor but intelligent pupils of the San Antonio Elementary School in Bulaon resettlement site here.

Dychitan, who will enter Grade 4, finished eighth in her class. Her father earns a living from driving a pedicab.

Dimabuyu, who was abandoned by her widowed mother, will enrol in Grade 5.

The Neda staff adopted the two on the prodding of school principal Romeo Matic.

One day in March, Matic walked into the Neda office and explained the plight of his pupils.

Dropouts

"Many of them have dropped out in the middle of the school year because they have no money for transport and meals while in school," Matic told the employees.

He also reported a high incidence of sickness among students because they skipped meals for lack of money.

Tuition is not a problem because it is free in public schools, he said.

Matic's appeal did not land on deaf ears. After meeting the two girls, the staff immediately put up a used candy jar near the office's door.

Daily, several coins and bills, saved from not sending text messages, are dropped in the jar.

A peso a day

"What's a peso daily for a kid determined to finish an education? Combined, that (money) means a lot to them. It's going to help break the vicious cycle of poverty through education," Remigio Mercado, Neda regional director, told the INQUIRER.

The Central Luzon Association of Regional Officers (Claro), where Mercado is president, decided to adopt the same program, christening it "Baon Para kay Bunso." At least 50 agencies belong to the Claro.

Vilma Labrador, Department of Education regional director, confirmed Matic's reports.

"There is a high incidence of children dropping out of school because they have no transport money and food allowance," she said.

"Not only once did I see a student fainting in the classroom because of hunger," Rosario Pimentel, president of the Bulacan State University, said.

Adopt-a-student

Claro officials said a batch of 25 employees agreed to adopt one deserving student. The DepEd, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, and the Commission on Higher Education will screen and select the beneficiaries.

The generosity did not end there.

While walking through the Neda hallway last week, Rene Romero, vice chair of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industries for North Luzon, saw the jar and asked what it was for.

Told of the "Baon Para kay Bunso" program, Romero immediately donated P20,000.

Mercado said Claro leaders decided to use the money to make wooden donation boxes.

The boxes were seen being distributed on Tuesday. One was to be given to President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday when she visited her home province on her 55th birthday.

"We hope (the program) succeeds and lasts long enough to send the likes of Abigail and Alice through college," Mercado said.

Arlyn airs appeal to media colleagues

From page A1

was last seen at the Orchid Garden Hotel in Zamboanga City on Jan. 19.

Earlier media reports said she was "captured" by Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya after she failed to give the bandit group a share of the proceeds from the sale of the Burnham tapes.

The Burnhams are being held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

Later media reports said De la Cruz orchestrated her disappearance as a "publicity stunt." Most media reports said she was in Basilan.

Inq7.net sources, however, said De la Cruz was "waylaid" by a group of military integrees who thought she was in Jolo to deliver the ransom for the Burnhams. The group killed a young Abu Sayyaf member who was her guide, the source said.

The integrees are former members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) who were commissioned as regular members of the Armed Forces under the 1996 peace agreement between the government and the MNLF.

The integrees, according to the source, stripped and slapped De la Cruz when they found she had no money.

After two weeks of being threatened with death, the integrees turned over De la Cruz to a "composite armed group" who is now demanding a ransom of P40 million.

De la Cruz, who produces the evening newscast of Net25, the television channel of the Iglesia ni Cristo, said she was in constant danger and that she had come to terms with her fate.

Below is the full text of De la Cruz's letter:

An open letter to all my colleagues

YOU have judged me, accused me and crucified me. But I don't blame you. I understand the industry, and I do realize you are reporting based on just a limited point of view of the entire story.

What I don't understand is the hatred. *Marami pala sa inyo ang galit sa akin, maging mga sarili kong kaibigan sa industriya, may lihim palang galit.*

Isa lang ang hinihiling ko, sana paglaya ko, kung makakalaya pa ako, pakinggan nyo ang panig ko.

I am confessing to one "crime"—that I entered this mess—because I'm a scoop-hungry reporter. *Gusto ko ako lang, ako ang una, ako ang magbubunyag.* There was a time the media organizations I represented in the past considered that as an asset, *di ba?*

The reality now is that I am a hostage of a composite group of armed men in Sulu. I've come to accept death and even embrace it. *Hindi ako takot sa kamatayan. Hindi na.*

But I'm still alive despite what I have been through. *Katungkulan ko na ipaglaban pa rin ang pagkakataong mabubuhay alang-alang sa mga anak ko at asawa.*

I have two kids—Katrina is 5 years old and Nica is 1 year and 6 months old. My husband, Edwin Collantes, needs me. I have a family. *Mahal na mahal ko sila.*

Maraming ibinintang sa akin. Alam nyo ba na kasama kayong mga kasamahan ko sa ipinagtatanggol ko dito? Dennis Sabangan of PDI was here a few days before I arrived in Sulu. *Nakita niya ang galit ng maraming sibilyan sa* media. It was a case of wrong timing. *Masyado akong kampante.*

I will tell you the entire story, I will, I will.

Pero hostage *pa ako,* and this is not an ordinary hostage crises (sic). Jan. 20 *ng gabi ako naharang—mahigit dalawang buwan na ako dito.*

Sa lahat ng mga tumutulong, lihim man or hayag, sa mga panalangin lalo na ng mga kapatid ko sa Iglesia ni Cristo, salamat.

Kung aabutan ako dito ng kamatayan, isa lang ang gusto kong unawain ninyo—hindi ko inilagay sa alanganin ang propesyong pinahalagahan ko sa loob ng labingdalawang taon. Please seek the complete story and understand why I am saying this.

If I survive this, hear . . . me out and tell my side of the story.

Arlyn

Stella keeps regatta title

DEFENDING champion Stella frustrated Karakoa right at its home turf to rule the President's Cup Regatta 2002 Open Racing Class yesterday at the Manila Bay Yacht Club for the second straight year. The Fred Kinmoth-skippered Stella recovered its bearings in the final chase with a corrected time of 4:00:23, just a minute ahead of Australia's Hi-Fidelity (4:01:26).

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◎ Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Quezon City A triumphs

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Quezon City A struck in the lower boards to defeat defending champion Mandaluyong A, 2.5-1.5, Sunday in the first of two matches that will determine this year's champion in the National Inter-Cities and Municipalities chess championship at the Highlander Hotel here. Rex Ami and Hann Perez led QC A's victory.

Negros, Olongapo beat foes

GAME TODAY: Cebu Coliseum
6 p.m.—Davao vs Cebu

OLONGAPO CITY—John Ferriols, the go-to-guy, and Dino Aldeguer, the rising star, shone as RCPI Negros spoiled Pampanga's return in the Metropolitan Basketball Association with a 76-67 overtime victory yesterday at the jampacked Olongapo Convention Center here.

Back-to-back baskets by Ferriols, the 1998 MVP, sparked Negros' rampage in the extension period even as Aldeguer keyed the nine-point closing run that broke the last deadlock at 67 with 1 minute and 48 seconds to go.

In the second game, the debuting Olongapo Volunteers delighted their fans by humbling reigning national champion LBC Batangas, 90-85.

Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon and his wife, Olongapo Mayor Kate, led the huge throng who cheered the home team from the start up to the final buzzer.

Aldeguer scored on a jumper, fed Jose Francisco on the run and then sealed the win for new Negros coach Joshua Villapando with two freethrows, time down to 23 seconds.

A Blitz 3 by Francisco capped Negros' strong finish that gave it a share of the early lead with First Conference inaugural winners Professional Davao Eagles and Cebuana Lhuillier Gems.

The Eagles beat the Cagayan de Oro Amigos, 93-82, while the Gems bested the Osaka Pangasinan Waves, 109-99, in another overtime Saturday night at the Cebu Coliseum.

Davao and Cebuana Lhuillier will dispute the solo lead in today's lone game at 6 p.m. also at the Cebu Coliseum.

It was a stingy defeat for Pampanga as it could have won the game in regulation after Dave Bautista was sent to the charity stripe with Negros ahead by just one, 63-62, time down to 2.8 seconds.

Earlier, LBC Batangas' Eddie Laure was honored as the 2001 MVP, while his mentor, Olsen Racela, was acknowledged as Best Coach.

Scores:

NEGROS 76—Ferriols 16, Francisco 13, Hugnatan 12, Aldeguer 10, Espiritud 10, Bautista 9, Benedicto 4, Madrid 2.

PAMPANGA 67—Agustin 13, Ofrecio 13, Bautista 12, Bansil 8, Santos 7, Mejia 5, Garcia 5, Gascon 4.

Quarters: 23-19, 38-43, 51-55, 63-all, 76-67.

ACTRESS Isabel Granada (right) hugs PATTS teammate Connie Luzabio after they downed Philippine State College of Aeronatics, 21-17, in the 6th Nestea beach volleyball eliminations at the La Salle-Greenhills courts last Saturday. PATTS, however, bowed out of contention after losing to powerhouse Letran, 21-11, in yesterday's round of 16. ROMY HOMILLADA

Letran, Adamson spikers advance

By Dennis Eroa

NCAA powerhouse Letran, Adamson, St. Jude and Mapua made it to the Boracay finals by flashing their fiery forms yesterday in the women's division of the 6th Nestea Beach Vollley Championships at the La Salle-Greenhills sand courts.

The Intramuros-based Letran belles frustrated Rizal Technological University, 21-18, while the Lady Falcons stopped the winning run of their UAAP rivals the University of the East Amazons, 21-15 before an appreciative crowd which braved the oven-hot atmopshere.

St. Jude, hardly given a second look at the start of this Metro Manila eliminations, continued its magical run, edging Philippine Christian University, 21-19, as Kriza Cabanog and Angie Adorable showed better coordination against the PCU tandem of Liezl Constantino and Joan Gementiza.

Mapua, starring Louvella Abanilla and Janilyn Sarabia, downed PSBA, 21-13.

In the men's division, Central Colleges of the Philippines and PATTS frustrated the respective attempts of St. Jude and Letran to join their female counterparts with contrasting victories.

High-leaping Robert Crisencio and Christian Pascual powered PATTS to a thrilling 21-19 win over highly favored Letran, while CCP's Michael Omaña and Jomel Bernardo walloped Edward Valbuena and Francis Bonzon of St. Jude, 21-14.

PATTS and CCP also advanced to the Boracay meet in this event supported by Speedo, the official outfitter, Mikasa, Asian Spirit—the People's Airline, WG&A Superferry, Astring O-Sol Ice, Kenny Rogers Roasters, Carl's Jr. and Boracay Resorts namely Villa de Oro, Gold Crown Club, Club 10, Crystal Sand and Alyssa Resort.

Teams from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will vie for eight finals spots, four each from the men's and women's divisions this weekend, also at the same venue. Favored schools from Luzon are Laguna College of Business and Arts, Baguio Colleges Foundation, La Salle-Dasmariñas, University of Assumption-Pampanga and UP Los Baños.

Cebu's Southwestern University, University of San Carlos and University of San Jose Recoletos, Iloilo's Doctor's College, Central Visayas Polytechnic College, Holy Cross of Davao, University of Mindanao and Ateneo de Davao head the big guns in the Vis-Min.

Youth Games on

THE FIRST Manila Youth Games (MYG) got under way yesterday at the historic Rizal Memorial Stadium. Over 2,000 athletes, who are no older than 12 years, participated in the opening ceremonies of Manila City Hall's pet program aimed to discover future sports heroes.

"This is one of the endeavors Manila has in mind especially for the youth. We also hope to mold children into assets of society, as future sports heroes and as future leaders through sports," Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said.

Coca-Cola subdues Selecta-RP, 70-66

By June Navarro

GAME TOMORROW: Cuneta Astrodome
6 p.m.—Red Bull vs Talk N Text

RON Hale and Ato Morano clicked as Coca-Cola outlasted Selecta-RP Team, 70-66, yesterday in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Hospitalized Saturday night after consuming spoiled food at dinner, Hale didn't see action in the entire first quarter but still led all scorers with 26 points on top of five rebounds and four assists.

But it was the 6-foot Morano who secured the Tigers' seventh victory in 10 games after he nailed a triple from the right flank in the last 36 seconds that razed the hopes of the Nationals.

Morano also sparkled in the long court during the Tigers' recent triumph over Batang Red Bull after going four out of six from the trifecta territory.

The Tigers thus gained a twice-to-beat incentive going into the quarterfinals while denying entry to Selecta-RP, which dropped to 3-7, in the next phase.

In the second game, Sta. Lucia Realty subdued San Miguel Beer, 73-65, to improve its mark and tie Federal Express at 5-4. The Beermen absorbed their fifth defeat in nine games.

Scores:

COKE 70—Hale 26, Ellis 21, Morano 10, Abuda 6, Balesteros 3, Avenido 2, Antonio 2, Manalo 0.

SELECTA-RP 66—Taulava 17, Espino 12, Racela 12, Menk 10, Hontiveros 6, Duremdes 4, Jackson 3, Alapag 2.

Quarters: 14-13, 31-26, 46-42, 70-66

Sports centers blessing tomorrow

PAENG'S Towcenter Bowl and Efren's Magic billiard room will be blessed tomorrow (April 9), with the country's top bowler and billiard player—Paeng Nepomuceno and Efren "Bata" Reyes—attending the inauguration of the two new sports establishments at the Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City.

Special event of the day will be an exhibition match at 4:30 p.m. between Reyes, the Philippines' No. 1 pool pro, and Francisco "Django" Bustamante, No. 2, at the Activity Area of the mall immediately after the formal ceremonies at 3:30 p.m.

Wack Wack GC backs Manila Amateur

THE MANILA Amateur is poised to become another major event in the local sports calendar with the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club throwing its full support behind the tourney slated April 23 to 26.

Also backing the golfest are Northwest Airlines and several leading golf brands.

Wack Wack president Ben Abalos said that the Manila Amateur is a welcome follow-up to the recent Philippine Open the club recently hosted.

"Wack Wack will always be supportive of events that can help mold local players into their best potential and possibly make the country proud of them someday," said Abalos who has regained for the Mandaluyong its reputation as a perfect tournament venue.

QUE

Marlon Dizon, a member of Wack Wack who had won the national stroke play title, is expected to lead the championship class together with back-to-back Philippine Open low amateur winner Angelo Que and Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Juvic Pagunsan.

The awards dinner and raffle are looking very attractive as more companies are backing the event. Northwest Airlines has committed two round-trip business class tickets to the US, Bridgestone/Tourstage its hot-selling V700 drivers and V7000 irons, Cleveland its wedge and launcher woods, Hogan its Edge irons and forged wedges, Adams its GT Tour irons and fairway woods, Never Compromise its popular putters, Ogio its unique golf and boston bags, Kasco its drivers for the raffle package. Apparel sponsor Greg Norman is introducing its Play Dry shirts.

While the championship battle is something to look forward to this summer, there is much anticipation for the competition in the other divisions.

The Manila Amateur has divisions for Class A for 6-10 handicappers, Class B for 11-5, Class C for 16-20. There is also a senior division with Senior A for 0-9 and Senior B for 10-18.

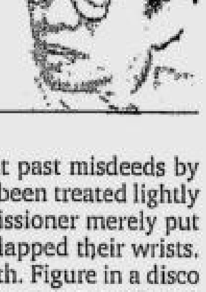
Registration is already ongoing at all Pacsports outlets located at the Wack Wack, Manila Golf, Alabang, Capitol Hills, Valley, Malarayat Robinson's Galleria, Festival Mall and Legaspi Village. Entry fee is P2,500.

Those in the championship class will play 72 holes and the others 36 holes. Interested players may also call Pacsports at 817-5872 for more information.

PBA treating imports too lightly?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo



THE POPULAR Philippine Basketball Association should put more teeth and not much tail in dealing with those imports with bloated egos who figured in a recent disco brawl. And I don't buy the explanation of PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino that the matter of how these imports should conduct themselves here (specifically outside the playing court) should be the responsibility of the imports' mother club. I beg to disagree.

Because these imports are an extension of the PBA, it is the responsibility and moral obligation of the league to impose its will and send the message that unsavory incidents such as those involving the imports' will and send the message that unsavory incidents such as those involving the imports' will not be tolerated. Jun B should tell these visiting players that it is their duty to observe proper conduct at all times, where ever they go, while earning big money and enjoying the hospitality of the Filipino people.

I still believe that past misdeeds by these imports have been treated lightly and that the commissioner merely put on kid gloves and slapped their wrists. The PBA has no teeth. Figure in a disco brawl and show disrespect to Filipino women and the worst that will happen to an import is to read a worthless summon from the office of the PBA commissioner.

What is happening now only proves what many have been saying all along: These imports are nothing but pampered arrogant and abusive players who are playing or the big money which they would otherwise not earn in the United States. Worse, most of them look down upon native Filipinos, showing rudeness and disrespect to our women.

Recall that months ago, Robert Parker of Sta. Lucia made us boiling mad when he argued and prohibited his finger of coach Adonis Tierra during a PBA game. That lack of respect to a Filipino superior, needless to say, sent the wrong message to the public, to the youth in particular. Another Sta. Lucia import, Damien Owens, figured in another ugly incident when he touched the behind of a pretty Filipina, incurring the anger of her escort who belonged to a rich and powerful family.

And most recently, four imports from different PBA teams figured in another disco brawl after one of them made advances on a Filipina girl. The four imports, including local players who witnessed the ugly incident, have been summoned to the office of the PBA commissioner. After that, what?

* * *

For inquiries, call fax/phone (044) 933-1214.

Orchard lines up summer sked

THE ORCHARD Golf and Country Club, the sports center that has long been tagged as Asia's best-kept secret, is out to keep its members and thejr families swinging clubs in the course and rackets at the courts as well as splashing in its well-maintained pools this summer.

A series of activities in coordination with the country's best swimming instructors and a special tieup with celebrities is giving members and their guests more than enough reasons to make Orchard the place to cool off as the summer vacation heats up.

Orchard boasts of the biggest clubhouse in the Philippines, an elongated structure covering no less than 15,000 square meters with world-class sports amenities.

The Professional Swimming Coaches Academy of the Philippines, an organization of national coaches recognized by the Philippine Sports Commission, recently tied up with The Orchard for a "Learn to Swing Program" from April 1 to May 30.

The instructors are national coaches Elvis Baldonado and Ike Buan.

Tennis buffs, meanwhile, get the chance to play with celebrities in the Rock N'Roll Camp.

Popular actors Zoren Legaspi, Kier Legaspi, Miguel Vera and Mandy Ochoa will be sharing their knowhow on the sport and play with camp enrollees at the Orchard's shell courts.

Golfers will have their share of the fun with the monthly golf tournament on April 25, a handicap play stableford event co-sponsored by GM Auto World Makati. Lessons at the driving range are also available.

Orchard general manager Tom Clemente III said for the whole summer, scores at the bowling center and the golf course will be monitored and top performers will be given prizes in kind.

Goosen ahead by 2 strokes; Pak also up

DULUTH, Georgia—Phil Mickelson's putter let him down again. Retief Goosen was there to take advantage Saturday.

The South African, whose only victory on American soil came in last year's US Open, shot a 4-under-par 68 in the third round of the BellSouth Classic to take a two-stroke lead over Mickelson. In Los Angeles, California, South Korea's Se Ri Pak fired her second straight four-under-par 68 to take a three-stroke lead going into the final round of the LPGA Office Depot tournament. **AP**

RP Cup bets down Kuwaitis

By Dennis Eroa

TOUGH-LOOKING Adelo Abadia rescued the Philippines from what could have been a forgettable Davis Cup experience, whipping a nervous Mozaad Al-Jazzaf of Kuwait in the deciding reverse singles, 6-3, 6-2, 6-1, before a delirious crowd yesterday in the Asia-Oceania tie at the sweltering Philippine Columbian Association courts in Paco, Manila.

Earlier, Filipino number one Johnny Arcilla fell to the smart plays of Kuwaiti rival Mohammad Al-Ghareeb, 0-6, 3-6, 2-6, which deadlocked the tie at 2-2 and left the 24-year–old Abadia with the huge task of rescuing the Philippines.

Last Saturday, Abadia bowed to Al-Ghareeb in the second singles after Arcilla had given the Philippines a 1-0 lead with a 7-6 (7-4) , 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 triumph over Al-Jazzaf.

The 5-foot-7 Abadia teamed up beautifully with Arcilla as the Filipinos made it 2-1 by winning the doubles, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-4), 6-1 over Al-Ghareed and Hussain Al-Ashwak.

"Adelo was ready to play regardless of the outcome of Arcilla's match. I think his experience and the desire to win carried him to victory," said RP non-playing captain Johnny Jose.

As a result, the Philippines avoided relegation to Group III and will remain in Group II.

Playing only in his second Davis Cup, the tall Al-Jazzaf, who packed an explosive two-fisted backhand, appeared shaken by the noise and celebration associated with Davis Cup. More importantly, he lost his rhythm when the Filipino netter looked content in engaging him to a leisurely exchange of groundstrokes, while occasionally venturing into the net which produced big points.

As Al-Jazzaf sent a backhand wide for the final point, Abadia did not let out a big yell, but gritted his teeth and raised his hands in victory as his teammates spilled to the court and hugged him.

"It was a wonderful feeling. I'm just glad it's over," said Abadia, who is known more for winning doubles than singles matches in the Davis Cup. "I have the experience and my game is sharp."

A Filipino tennis supporter also ran to the court waving a Philippine flag, reminding a group of yellow-shirted Filipinas, who were jeered all throughout for supporting Kuwait, of their land of birth.

Jose said the nationals may go to an ITF training camp in Barcelona, Spain middle of this year to polish their skills as they prepare to resume their bid to make Group I.

Meanwhile, the exciting RP Davis Cup win over Kuwait will be shown on April 11 and 12 over IBC 13 from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Ron de los Reyes, Joseph Lizardo and Martin Misa are the anchors.

San Pedro lass tops triathlon

TWELVE-YEAR-OLD Mimi Lucas took advantage of Astrud Valdez's mental lapse en route to victory in the San Pablo City Sprint Triathlon and National Age-Group Triathlon second leg yesterday in San Pablo City, Laguna.

Lucas registered a time of one hour, 28 minutes and 47 seconds in the 25.8 km (800 meter swim-20 km bike-5 km run) event organized by the San Pablo Mantas and the BJ Country Club to top the 19-below age title in the female bracket. Valdez ended (1:33:48), while third place went to Joana Fugoso (1:38:43).

Perlito Ibañez, a San Pedro, Laguna entry like Lucas, registered the event's best time of 1:10:27 to win the 20-24 men's title.

Philippine Half-Ironman organizer Raul Cuevas clocked 1:11:33 to claim the 25-29 crown, while 40-44 champion Rune Stroem registered a time of 1:12:25.

The event, sponsored by the city government on San Pablo, the provincial government of Laguna, BJ Country Club, the San Pablo Mantas, Agua de Montana, Informatics Computer Institute, Speedo, PSC, POC and ATR Wines and Spirits, attracted 71 participants.. The race was also part of promoting tourism in the city.

Dart tourney set April 13-14

THE NATIONAL Dart Foundation of the Philippines is staging the Darterong Pinoy P75,000 Summer Dartfest on April 13 and 14 at the Pearl Plaza, Quirino Avenue, Parañaque City.

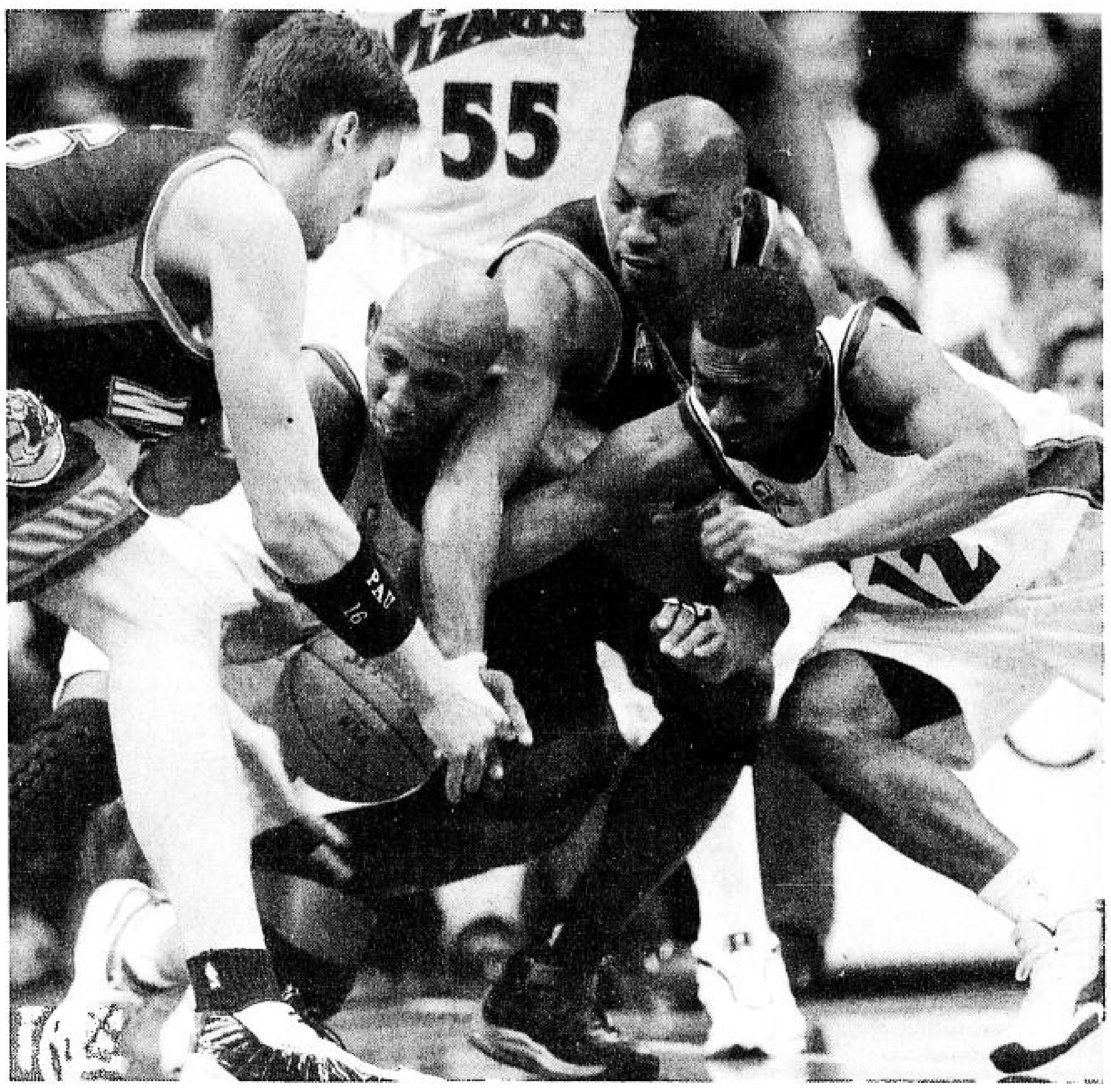
Sponsored by Caltex, Pearl Plaza, Casino Filipino, Sportshouse, Robson Sportscraft and supported by Landway USA, Icarus and Chiligrass Advertising, all events are classified, so rated players cannot be paired with another rated player.

Tito Soncuya, president of the National Dart Foundation, expects a big field of novice and beginners to sign-up.

Soncuyar added that the event aims to promote darts as a wholesome sport for the whole family.

The classified 701 draw triples starts at 1 p.m. on Saturday(April 13), followed by the classified 501 fixed doubles.

For inquiries, call Soncuya at 416-9242 or 372-3541, or Pet Salvador at 889-6794.



TWO-ON-TWO

It's two-against-two as Memphis' Pau Gasol (left) and Tony Massenburg (second from right) battle Washington's Chris Whitney (12) and Popeye Jones for ball possession in the third quarter of their NBA game in Washington Saturday night. The Wizards triumphed, 88-85. Complete results: San Antonio 89, Dallas 87; Cleveland 120, Chicago 101; Charlotte 93, Atlanta 86; Washington 88, Memphis 85; Minnesota 108, Phoenix 104 and Portland 113, Golden State 86. AP

WORLD GROUP

Russia in semis; US ahead

LONDON—Russia secured a berth in the Davis Cup semifinals when Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Marat Safin defeated Thomas Johansson and Jonas Bjorkman in five sets Saturday to take an unbeatable 3-0 lead over Sweden in their World Group quarterfinal.

On the red clay courts of Moscow's Luzhniki stadium, the Russians won 3-6, 7-6 (6), 6-7 (2), 7-5, 6-3, making Sunday's reverse singles in the best-of-five tie a formality.

In Pau, France, Fabrice Santoro and Michael Llodra gave the defending champions a 2-1 lead over the Czech Republic after the doubles with a 6-3, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Jiri Novak and David Rikl.

In Buenos Aires, Argentina, Goran Ivanisevic, who skipped singles action because of a sore shoulder, teamed up with Ivan Ljubicic to beat Guillermo Canas and Lucas Arnold of Argentina 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-0, 8-6 in a dramatic five-setter, giving Croatia its first point and a glimmer of hope ahead of Sunday's reverse singles.

And in Houston, Texas, Americans Todd Martin and James Blake beat Spain's Alberto Martin and Juan Balcells in straight sets, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4, to give the United States a 2-1 lead in their quarterfinal series.

Kafelnikov and Safin followed up on their victories in Friday's singles to beat the Swedes in three hours and 38 minutes and send Russia to its first semifinals in tennis' premier team competition since 1999. The Russians will meet either Argentina or Croatia.

The Swedes took the first set after Kafelnikov lost his serve in the fourth game, but narrowly lost the second in a tiebreaker when the Russian scored an ace and then slammed a return straight down the line to gain two decisive points.

The third set again went to a tiebreaker, but this time Sweden held the upper hand, ignoring screams and cheers from the sellout crowd of 13,000 and racing to a 7-2 win. *AP*

Pinay golfer rules Thailand meet

PETCHABURI, Thailand—The Philippines' Bambee de la Paz, saving her best for last, shot an 83 to rule the Girls' Class C in the second Thailand International Junior Golf Championship here recently.

Together with her earlier rounds of 86 and 95 at the par 72, 6,959-yard Sawang Resort Golf Club course, De la Paz wound up with 264 to run away with the crown.

De la Paz was one of 10 players from the Philippine Junior Golf Federation, who competed in the 72-hole tournament.

"Bambee played very well and her victory prevented a shutout from the Philippines," said Tito Boy Cantada, the federation president and delegation head.

Indonesia's Chandra Ines Putra Iriptadi closed out with a 94 to finish second behind De la Paz at 274. Third was Dhea Martika Mahendra, another Indonesia, after shooting 101 for 292.

Vivienne Velasquez, another Filipino bet, scored a final round 112 to go with her efforts of 112 and 117 to settle for third place in the girls' Class E with 341.

Maria Imelda Picolo equalled Velasquez's placing in the Girls' Class D after shooting a last-round 86 to go with her previous rounds of 87 and 80 for 253.

Joe "Pempe" Padilla became the third Filipino to place third in the boys' Class D.

Bino Lorenzo de la Paz scored a final day 97 to finish fourth in the Boys' Class E with 279 while Jenz Tecson carded a 79 to settle for fifth place in Boys' Class A.

An international field of 190 players from 10 countries competed in one of Thailand's top junior championships.

Aside from the Philippines and Thailand, the other nations represented in the 54-hole event were Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Singapore, India and the United states.

Ucap weights submission today

ANOTHER jampacked crowd is anticipated at Mandaluyong Coliseum when the 8th Ucap Bumble Bee Balbina/Roadmaster 7-Cock Derby gets under way tomorrow (April 9).

Sponsors are Sagupaan Super feeds and washout Shampoo of Lakpue Drug.

The event is a follow-up to the blockbuster LCC 7-Cock derby last week (52 entries) which produced five co-champions: Mayor Nene Aguilar and Gerry Tamos (Bakbakan sa Las Piñas), ambassador Danding Cojuangco (Bumbble Bee Balbina), Alex Tang (Guts and Glory), Raymond Velayo and Alan Tan (Arnis Master) and Tony Tan (Swing Fatman). Derby hosts are Cojuangco and his longtime *sabong* partner Pete Rodriguez, team manager of the Balbina Group.

Submission of weights is today, Monday, April 8 from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Interested parties may contact 534-4110, 531-4003, 531-4005 and 535-2341.

Derby manage Rey Lee said that Mandaluyong Coliseum will strictly implement the "bayad-agad" format on center bets immediately after every fight.

Marathon reaches West Visayas

TACLOBAN, Leyte—Rough roads and heavy traffic notwithstanding, the Nissan Exalta GS Superior is all set for its major assault of Western Visayas via Cebu, Negros and Panay in the fourth edition of the Pan Philippine Marathon after a back-breaking trip which started at high noon Friday.

Andy Dysangco, who heads the battle-scarred crew also beefed up by fellow seasoned rally driver Willie Ingles, hardly had the time to take a nap when they arrive here at 9:45 a.m. Saturday.

Before embarking on the Visayan swing, Dysangco and Ingles will confer with the Visayan crew to ensure the next legs will run smoothly.

The crew was stalled starting from Sto. Tomas, Batangas, where annual fiesta celebrations were being held and it was only after Sariaya, Quezon where they were able to break free and fully savor the amenities of the head-turning car that is powered by a smooth-as-silk QG 1.6-liter engine mated with a 4-speed automatic transmission.

Filipino boxers suffer losses

BANGKOK—Thailand's devastating surge finally caught up with team Caltex Philippines Saturday, derailing lightweight Florencio Ferrer's bid for at least a bronze medal in the 25th King's Cup boxing championship here.

Jonard Ladon, meanwhile, met a punching machine from Kazakhstan and was forced to defend throughout in their featherweight match, to no avail.

Both Filipinos failed to last the distance with Ladon declared the loser going into the last 42 seconds of the third against Jafarov Galib and Ferrer lasting less than two rounds against Terdsak Jandang of Thailand B at the Mall Convention Center here.

Roligon derby on tap

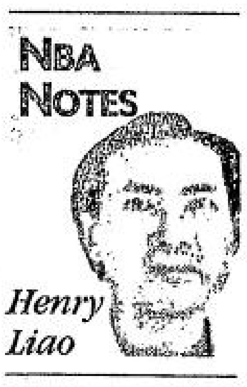
LADY cocker Princess Naldo (Golden Dragon Game Birds), Philip Chiongbian (Wild Wind) and Bobby Velayo join forces today (April 8) when the country's most promising cocking group, Galleros de Manila, presents its penultimate offering for the 2001-2002 season at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City.

An intense and action-packed event looms with leading contenders for the coveted Cocker of the Year title are expected to make their moves to strengthen their hold on their respective current rankings or improve their position in preparation for the final round.

For inquiries, call 833-16-38 or 833-22-75.

Hot teams

NBA NOTES



Henry Liao

THE two most surprising teams in the NBA this season reside in the Eastern Conference and both are headed for the title in their respective divisions. They are New Jersey and Detroit.

The New Jersey Nets, bannered by MVP candidate Jason Kidd, own a 49-27 record to pace the Atlantic Division and the entire Eastern Conference.

Today (Manila time), the Nets host division rival Boston (44-32), seeking a victory that will officially hand them the Atlantic crown and secure a 50-win season. In both cases, that would be a first in the franchise's 26-year NBA existence. (the Nets had three 50-win finishes and a pair of league championships in the old American Basketball Association before they joined the NBA in 1976-77.)

New Jersey, which went 26-56 last campaign under then first-year NBA head coach Byron Scott, turned its season around following the summer acquisition of Kidd from Phoenix (in exchange for shoot-first, pass-second playmaker Stephon Marbury) and the return to health of key starters Keith Van Horn and Kerry Kittles.

The Nets are assured of their first playoff stint in four years and only the second in the last eight. Any combination of four New Jersey wins or four Detroit losses will also give the Nets the best record in the East and the homecourt advantage throughout the conference playoffs.

The Detroit Pistons (46-30) only need to capture their home assignment against the lottery-bound Atlanta Hawks on April 9 (Manila time) to formally clinch the Central Division flag for the first time since 1989-90 when the Motor City unit won its second of back-to-back NBA titles.

The Pistons, who posted a miserable 32-50 record in 2000-01, are making the playoffs following a one-year absence.

Credit the turnaround to rookie NBA mentor Rick Carlisle, who along with Scott is the leading candidate for NBA Coach of the Year honors. Carlisle's defensive scheme has resulted in the Pistons surrendering nearly six points per game less to the opposition than the previous year when the club was piloted by George Irvine.

Carlisle also has been able to convince star guard Jerry Stackhouse to share the offensive wealth.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

GOLF: PGA Bellsouth Classic, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r – 10 p.m.) on Star Sports
Golfglobe 2002 at 5:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
The 1999 Masters Official Films at 9 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
BASEBALL: MLB - Seattle Mariners vs Oakland Athletics at 8 a.m. (r –8:30 p.m.) on ESPN
BOWLING: CGU Asian Bowling Tour - Malaysia Quarterfinals at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN
POOL: Rack 'Em Up - Best of Mika Immonen at 7 p.m. on ESPN
SOCCER: English Premier Football League 2001/02 at 7 a.m. and 12 noon (r), Newcastle United vs Fulham tomorrow at 2:55 a.m. on Star Sports

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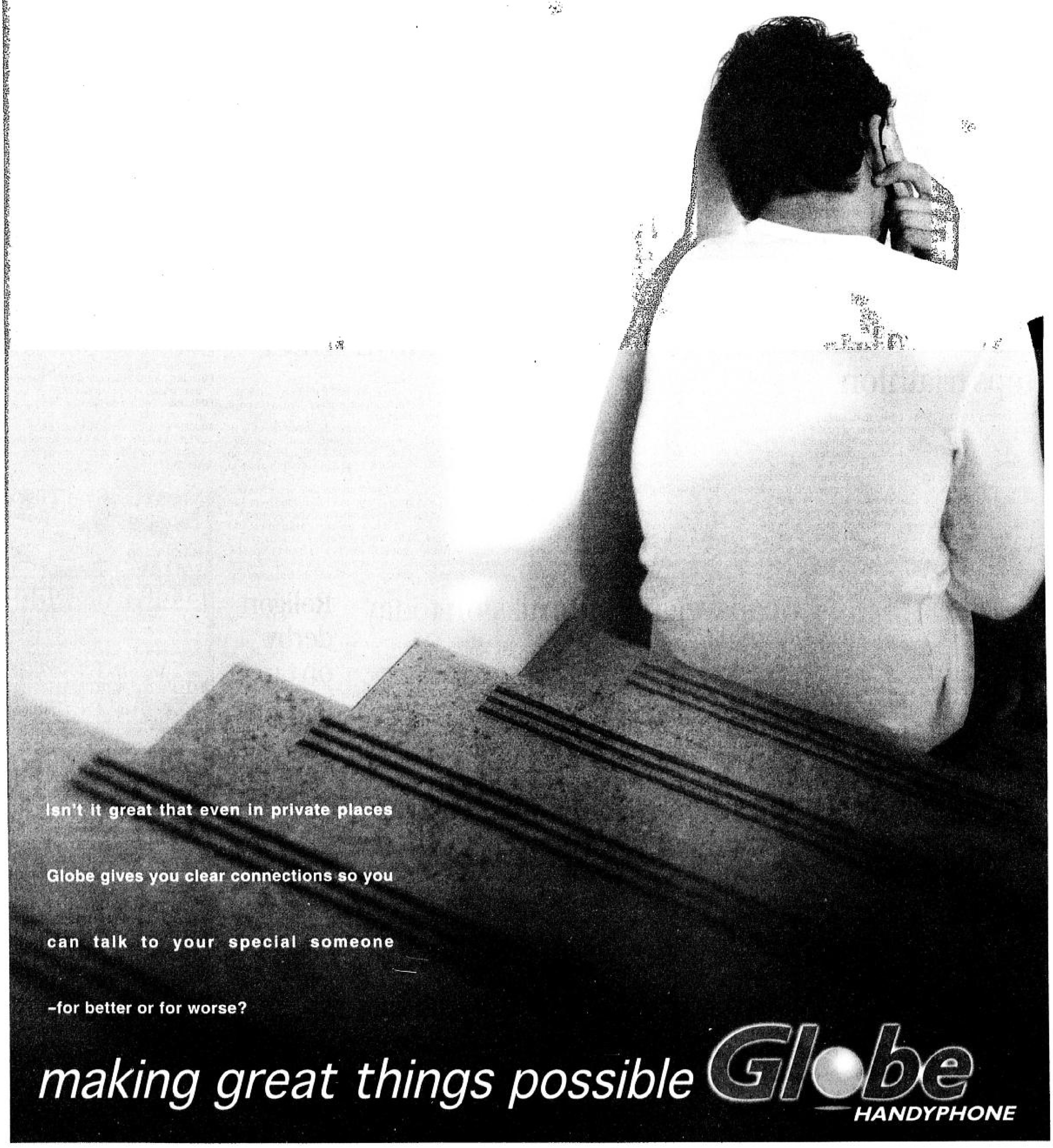

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making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

Terror in the living room /A24
New graduates, new job hunters /A24
Fire kills 3 kids /A24

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Nestlé man slain in traffic fight

By Jerome Aning

A SHOT rang out, and the Honda Civic driven by Francisco Philip Bautista rammed into a taxi which in turn slammed into two other cars. When police came, they found Bautista bleeding at the wheel, an unfired gun in his right hand.

The gunman who shot Bautista was apparently the one driving a white Toyota Corolla, but witnesses were not able to get the car's license plate number, police said.

Manila policeman are now hunting the Toyota Corolla driver who shot dead Bautista, an engineer and reserve Marine officer, on the Nagtahan flyover early Friday night.

Bautista, 40, a reserve captain of the Philippine Marine Corps and an engineer of the Nestle plant on Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City, was hit once in the right side of the back, police said. The bullet went out through Bautista's left armpit, police added.

The engineer was pronounced dead on arrival at the nearby De Ocampo Memorial Medical Center, in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Police said Bautista and the driver of the white Toyota Corolla quarreled about 7:30 p.m. Friday as they were descending the flyover's south-bound lane, which is part of Pandacan district.

A shot rang out and Bautista's car, a dark green Honda Civic (WAR-885), slammed into the rear of a taxi (TVX-298) that was also going down the flyover.

NESTLÉ MAN /A24

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CALTEX What Drives You

Terror in the living room

ACTION MAN PO2 Marlito Rivera

By Henry Barrameda
Contributor

(The names of the people in this account, except that of PO2 Rivera, have been changed to protect the innocent.—The author.)

CALL 117

ON the night of Sept. 11, 2001, Annabel Garcia and her two children spent some agonizing moments with a "terrorist" in a room in Antipolo City. The terrorist was her husband.

Over in Fairview, Quezon City, about 7:40 that same evening, the phone rang in the house of Vicky Montano's employer. The call was for Vicky's aunt, *Aling* Chaning, who also works and lives there as the *mayordoma*.

Vicky watched her aunt become increasingly agitated as the older woman listened to the voice on the other end of the line. Then *Aling* Chaning turned to her and said in Filipino, "Vicky, help me. Your cousin Annabel wants me to come and get her." Annabel's husband was threatening to kill her, according to the *mayordoma*.

Although rattled, Vicky decided they should report the matter to the authorities at once. She had heard of Call 117, and so she dialed the number. She got through quickly.

The 117 operator passed on her call to Antipolo City's Police Precinct 1.

The desk officer on duty received the call at 7:51 p.m. He gave the case to PO2 Marlito Rivera, the precinct investigator on duty. It was a complaint against Wilson Garcia, who was said to be threatening to kill his wife Annabel.

Sounds of fighting

After getting the complainant's name and address, Rivera tapped two police aides to come with him, one to drive the police car, the other to help him arrest the offending party.

In three minutes the police car reached the Antipolo address, which was only half a kilometer away from the police station.

"The person we asked for directions turned out to be a neighbor of Annabel and Wilson," recalled PO2 Rivera. "The man said his family had heard sounds of fighting in the couple's house."

Rivera and one of his companions found the Garcia gate open. A straight path led to the front door, which was open, too. From where they stood at the gate, the two policemen could see right into the living room of the Garcias.

What they saw froze them momentarily in their tracks. "I saw the man sitting on a sofa, his profile toward me, and he was holding a gun and was pointing it at someone else inside)," Rivera said.

The policemen quickly recovered their presence of mind. Seeing Wilson completely lost in the moment, the two policemen glanced at each other, then looked straight into the Garcias' living room. Before Wilson could realize what was happening, they had grabbed him simultaneously from each side, pointing their own guns at him.

Said Rivera: "He couldn't do a thing because he was drunk."

Relief, annoyance

Annabel sat in semi-darkness in one corner near the dining table. "She was staring blankly," said Rivera. "It was dark in the living room because the lights were out, but the door to the adjacent bedroom was open and the light from there shone on them."

Huddled together in one chair an arm's length from her were their two children, looking just as shocked.

As soon as Wilson was immobilized, Rivera pried loose from Wilson's right hand with the gun he had been pointing at his family.

Rivera took one look at the gun and was filled with a mixture of surprise, relief, and annoyance.

It was a toy gun.

Shaking his head, Rivera told Wilson, "This is only a toy gun. We received a complaint saying you were violent and threatening your family with a gun."

Wilson was too drunk to say anything, Rivera said.

The policeman turned to Annabel and said, "Follow us to the police station."

That the gun in her husband's hand was a toy didn't seem to register on her. The two children didn't seem to know what to feel, either.

Just kidding

At the precinct, Rivera decided he had no choice but to rely solely on the statement that Annabel would make, since Wilson was too drunk to talk.

Annabel never came, though. "I waited until eight o'clock the next morning," said Rivera.

As for Wilson, all he could say to Rivera the morning after was, " Sorry, sir, I was just joking. I was just really drunk."

Rivera pointed out that under the Family Code, domestic quarrels are to be referred to the barangay office for settlement, except when a fight is serious enough to place the life of a family member in danger.

But the case of the Garcias, he said, could have been treated as a police matter.

"That should fall under grave threats," he explained, even though the weapon turned out to be a toy.

The terror Wilson struck in his wife and children was all too real, after all. Who could tell how traumatic that evening's experience would be for them?

A warning to husbands who beat up their wives: Someone might just dial 117. Beating up anyone, even your wife, is a crime. And as all lawbreakers eventually learn, crime never pays. As Tolstoy said, God sees the truth, but waits.

New graduates, new job hunters

By Agnes E. Donato

TWO WEEKS before she would graduate from the University of the Philippines with an English degree, Ruth Tindaan feels compelled to check the newspapers' classified ads for job openings.

But Ruth knows that even her cum laude standing at no less than the state university would not necessarily land her a job.

"There's still probably a perception that UP graduates are better (than those who graduate from other schools)," she said. "But I don't want to rely much on that.

"I know many people who were not able to get a job after graduating from UP or from some exclusive school. I don't want that to happen to me," she added.

For the 20-year-old Ruth, job hunting is very much like joining a raffle: The more entries you send, the more chances you have of winning.

"Especially with the competition now," she said. "There are so many new graduates looking for employment and we all have to compete with the graduates from previous years who have yet to get a job until now."

There are 4,000 students from UP alone expected to graduate this month.

Ruth said she had already submitted her resume to various schools during the university-sponsored job fair last January, hoping to get a teaching job from any of these schools. She also applied in local magazines where she use her writing skills.

Another option she is considering is a journalism career, but she admitted that this was a little far from her field of studies, which focused more on linguistics.

"I just want to exhaust all the possibilities," she said. "It's still not clear where I would be working. All I know right now is that I have to get a job as soon as possible.

"I have to start supporting myself. *Marirap pag wala nang allowance* (It's difficult without an allowance)."

The pressure at home was a significant factor, she said.

Ruth's father was killed in a bus accident in Benguet in November 1999. Her mother had since been alone in raising her four children and sending them to school.

Ruth said her older brother is now in his third year in law school. One of her two younger siblings is a college sophomore and the other is in second year high school. Ruth said she had plans of taking up a master's degree, but that would have to wait until she had enough money to finance her higher education.

"My mom does not have to remind me of my responsibilities," she said. "I understand that I could not stay in school much longer."

But Ruth is confident that her UP education had prepared her for the harsh realities of a world outside the academe that she would soon be joining.

While she recognized that it was her personal abilities that would ultimately take her to places, she said she valued UP for training her to be independent.

"UP taught me to do things on my own and be critical of what I see around me," she said.

She said that she learned the value of time management from UP which she said provided students with an environment that was not limited to academics.

Ruth is an editor of UP's student publication, the Philippine Collegian and is a member of the UP Lingua Franca, an association of English majors, and of the UP Anido, a group of students from the Cordillera region.

Fire kills 3 kids

By Nelson F. Flores

THREE children were killed in a fire which broke out in a slum in Quezon City Saturday night.

Police identified the children as cousins Myra Panso, 14; Cheilo Riaflor, 8; and John Perry Cruz, 7, all residents of Pingkian I, Central, Barangay Pasong Tamo in Quezon City.

Their charred remains were found in the smoldering debris of the blaze, which started about 10:30 p.m. Saturday in the house owned by Jose Panso, authorities said.

SPO4 Constantino Isorena, Central Police district Office Station 3 (Sangandaan) desk officer, said the children were sleeping and the owner of the house was not home when the fire started. The children were apparently trapped inside the house, he added.

Arson investigators were still trying to determine the cause of the fire.

Senior Fire Officer 2 Joe Nagbacan said narrow streets leading to the fire scene prevented fire trucks from reaching the blaze. The Central Fire District had to use its mini-fire trucks, which are the size of a small jeep, he said.

The presence of lawmen and local barangay officials prevented any looting, and the quick response of Quezon City firemen prevented the blaze from spreading, authorities said.

Fire also razed a used tire warehouse and three houses in Barangay Cupang, Antipolo City also last Saturday.

But nobody was reported injured in the three-hour fire, which broke out about 10:45 a.m. An unattended bonfire of dried leaves and other debris started the fire, investigators said.

5,000 water leaks under repair—MMDA

By Christian V. Esguerra

IN AN effort to plug about 5,000 leaking water pipes in Metro Manila and ease the ill-effects of an ongoing water crisis in the metropolis, the Department of Public Works and Highways and the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) are rushing to fix the leaky pipes by June.

"We hope the public would bear with us," MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos said yesterday. "We're working round-the-clock to finish the diggings before the rainy days."

Abalos said "billions" of pesos are lost with these leaks, translating to substantial increases in water bills of households.

Most of the broken water pipes, he said, are in Manila, Quezon City, Caloocan, and Mandaluyong.

Excavations have been causing traffic build-ups in these areas despite the presence of MMDA personnel and traffic enforcers from local government units.

Besides the improvement of water pipes, the MMDA is also eyeing a portion of the Laguna Lake as "a major water source" for Metro Manila before the water crisis reaches its peak in 2005, Abalos said.

In a news conference last Wednesday, Abalos said the La Mesa Dam, the primary source of water in the metropolis, cannot meet the water needs of the population, which is increasing steadily. He said this would result in a serious water shortage in three years' time.

Nestlé man ...

From page A23

The taxi hit another Honda Civic (TCT-298) which, in turn, rammed a Toyota XL (ULC-725).

The drivers and passengers of the taxi and of the two other cars later told police they heard Bautista's car and the white Toyota Corolla blowing their horns.

Bautista and the man on board the Toyota Corolla might also have had a brief shouting match while driving, the witnesses added.

But none of them could remember the white Toyota Corolla's license plates nor provide a description of its driver, police said.

The Western Police District homicide section is looking into the possibility that the shooting was an ambush.

Members of the WPD Malacañang Field Force headed by Chief Insp. Bernie Banalo rushed to the scene and found Bautista slumped in the driver's seat of his Honda Civic.

The policemen brought Bautista to the hospital. Dr. Leo Escasa declared him dead at 8:15 p.m., police said.

Homicide investigator SPO2 Athos de Quiros said policemen found Bautista holding an unfired .45-caliber pistol in his right hand. Aside from his bullet wound, Bautista also had cuts in the right side of the forehead, De Quiros added.

They also found a bullet hole in the right window of the back seat, police said.

The WPD appealed to commuters and motorists who were also on the flyover at the time of the shooting to contact police if they could remember the plate number of the white Toyota Corolla or if they could give a description of its driver.

Stay cool, motorists advised

By Christian V. Esguerra

MOTORISTS who are stopped on the road by traffic enforcers for violating the color-coding scheme of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) should stay cool.

MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday gave this piece of unsolicited advice to avoid an incident similar to what happened to INQUIRER columnist and broadcast personality Ramon Tulfo.

Tulfo and four Marine bodyguards figured in an armed confrontation with about 20 Parañaque policemen who stopped them on the road for a color-coding violation last Tuesday at the Sucat interchange.

In a news conference also last Wednesday Abalos said, "If you're flagged down by a traffic enforcer over a traffic violation, just be nice and everything would be fine.

"My men are not hot-headed," he added. "They would even give you a salute if you're nice to them."

Police immediately closed the investigation of the near-shootout between Tulfo and his bodyguards and Parañaque policemen. No charges were filed against the veteran police reporter and his bodyguards after Southern Police District Director Jose Gutierrez found the incident a "mere misunderstanding between two government personnel doing their jobs"—the Marines providing security to Tulfo and the policemen who were in a legitimate police operation.

Abalos said motorists should just "calmly" explain why they are on the road even if their vehicles are violating the MMDA's color-coding scheme. He said this would avoid heated confrontations between the motorist and the traffic enforcers.

Once again, the MBA tries a winning play

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

UNLIKE those who had attempted—and missed—before him, Chito Loyzaga is in a position to score the winning basket.

He knows where and how his predecessors had fumbled.

But don't take this to mean that the Metropolitan Basketball Association (MBA), which Loyzaga now heads as its commissioner, is a total failure.

Not really, although it goes without saying that, after years of hard trying, MBA is still groping where it started.

It's frantically searching for the winning formula.

Remember that the MBA, with former President Fidel V. Ramos as principal guest, proudly launched its league in Lingayen with a big, bold vow to outplay and outshine the Philippine Basketball Association.

For its part, the PBA, through Commissioner Jun Bernardino, refused to comment on the otherwise alarming intentions of the MBA.

* * *

Today, it's MBA Commissioner Chito Loyzaga's turn to report how far "the other pro league" has gone in its ambition to bang and outsell the PBA.

Loyzaga himself confided to this reporter that the MBA had taken the wrong route. Meaning it used the wrong play in trying to outshine the PBA which, in the first place, has refused to regard as a rival the challenger to its commercial dominance of Philippine basketball.

No, no, it was all wrong, very wrong.

Those were Loyzaga's exact words last Wednesday at the Makati Coliseum in vowing that he would not use the same plot his predecessors had wrongly tried.

The PBA is the PBA, he said, and it would be foolish to try and push it out of the market.

To ensure survival—and eventual success—Loyzaga said they at the MBA will take a totally new path.

And this will be the complete opposite of the system which had been used in trying to shoot down the PBA.

They are not regarding the PBA as a rival, period.

* * *

Loyzaga said the MBA will be an entirely new league, with emphasis on talent discovery and grassroots development.

He said he will pursue the goal of searching for new talents and developing new stars of their own.

You are right, Loyzaga agreed, the MBA, through its formative years, had reluctantly taken on the semblance of a dumping ground.

Other than Rommel Adduccul and maybe a handful of commercial mainstays it could purely call its own, the MBA scrambled and chug-chugged, relying on many former stars which the PBA could no longer make proper use of.

In fact, not a few keen observers claimed that, despite its gallant efforts at soaring and shining, the MBA eventually got tagged as a junkyard of PBA discards.

That was not flattering, to say the least.

And Chito Loyazaga, his youngish eyes aglow, swore it's an ugly label they will have to try to shed.

* * *

How to do that?

They have new programs designed to make the MBA a solid, saleable, very viable league.

In making a clean breast of it during the successful launching of the 20th season of the Philippine Basketball League, Loyzaga also agreed that the MBA had used the wrong sales pitch when it agreed to carry only the names of either the provinces or cities of the teams in its fold.

While the MBA relied solely on the names of regional and provincial capitals, like Cebu, Batangas, Davao, Laguna, the league will now pursue a more vigorous sales drive.

It will put emphasis on corporate involvement.

Product names will eventually be used side by side with those of established capitals.

In the first place, he agreed, you cannot expect a province or a city to be able to cough up millions and millions in team funds without groaning in the end.

* * *

There must be strong commercial, corporate backing, he stressed, otherwise, the MBA would remain stuck where it had started.

But what if MBA bigwigs advise him that now is the perfect time to go after the neck of the PBA, because the PBA, in preparing for the Asian Games, itself appears scrambling for a winning formula at the gates?

No way, Loyzaga stressed, his lips twitching.

He said this is not boxing wherein you readily capitalize on the lapses of your opponent.

He has refused to be distracted.

He has the ball in his hands.

He has trained long and hard for this crucial play.

May the heir to King Caloy Loyzaga, finest Pinoy cager ever, score and provide the Great Difference for the MBA, his new team.

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173888

1	CROSS ROADS
2	TIME MACHINE
3	ICE AGE
4	BLADE 2
5	E.T.
6	HARI NG SELDA
7	ITLOG
8	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	BLADE 2
2	E.T.
3	ICE AGE
4	EVIL WOMAN
5	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
6	ITLOG
7	CROSS ROADS
8	TIME MACHINE
9	HARI NG SELDA
10	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	TIME MACHINE
2	SNAKE CHARMER
3	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
4	E.T.
5	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
6	CROSS ROADS
7	ICE AGE
8	BLADE 2
9	HARI NG SELDA
10	ITLOG
11	GOT 2 BELIEVE
12	EVIL WOMAN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
2	ICE AGE
3	EVIL WOMAN
4	CROSS ROADS
5	BLADE 2
6	E.T.
7	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8	ITLOG
9	HARI NG SELDA
10	GOT 2 BELIEVE
11	TIME MACHINE
12	BLADE 2

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	BLADE 2
2	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
3	ICE AGE
4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
5	E.T.
6	TIME MACHINE
7	CROSS ROADS
8	ITLOG
9	HARI NG SELDA
10	BLADE 2
11	EVIL WOMAN
12	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9205452

1	TIME MACHINE
2	BLADE 2
3	ITLOG
4	HARI NG SELDA
5	E.T.
6	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
7	ICE AGE
8	E.T.
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8006888

1	ICE AGE
2	CROSS ROADS
3	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
4	BLADE 2
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	ITLOG
7	HARI NG SELDA
8	E.T.
9	TIME MACHINE
10	EVIL WOMAN

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	E.T.
5	13 GHOSTS
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
7	HARI NG SELDA
8	ICE AGE

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	CLOSED
3	ICE AGE
4	HARI NG SELDA
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	E.T.
7	CLOSED
8	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	ICE AGE
2	E.T.
3	TIME MACHINE
4	ITLOG
5	CROSS ROADS
6	HARI NG SELDA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294075

1	ICE AGE
2	BLADE 2
3	HARI NG SELDA
4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ITLOG
3	BLADE 2

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
2	E.T.
3	BLADE 2
4	HARI NG SELDA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	E.T.
2	HARI NG SELDA
3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	D-TOX
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
6	ICE AGE

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN!
4 NEW
STATE-OF-THE-ART
VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

1
2

SOON TO OPEN!
2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

6389781-85

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1	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO	ICE AGE	E.T. RESTORATION	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO (THX)
2	THE TIME MACHINE	E.T. RESTORATION	ICE AGE	BLADE 2
3	BLADE 2	BLADE 2 (THX) GUARANTEED SEATS	BLADE 2	ICE AGE
4	ICE AGE	EVIL WOMAN	Onstage LANI ON SATGE APRIL 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 & 27 9:00 PM	TIME MACHINE
5		TIME MACHINE		E.T. RESTORATION
6		COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO		
7		CROSS ROADS		

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	BLADE 2
2 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
3 (DTS)	ICE AGE
4 GOLD (DTS)	E.T
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	CROSS ROADS
6 GOLD (SDDS)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	ICE AGE
8	HARI NG SELDA
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	EVIL WOMAN

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	ICE AGE
4	RESERVE
5	ITLOG
6 (DTS)	TIME MACHINE

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ITLOG
3	BLADE 2

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	BLADE 2
3	ITLOG
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TIME MACHINE
5	E.T.

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1	EVIL WOMAN
2	ITLOG
3	HARI NG SELDA
4	BLADE 2
5	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
6	E.T.
7	
8	

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1	E.T.

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	RIDING IN CARS W/ BOYS
2	OCEAN ELEVEN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	ANG GUSTO KO SA LALAKE
2	ITLOG
3	SENSUAL

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	ITLOG
A	TIME MACHINE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	TIME MACHINE
2	HARI NG SELDA
3	SNAKE CHARMER
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8508

1 (DOLBY)	HARI NG SELDA
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
5	EVIL WOMAN
6	ITLOG
7 (DTS)	E.T.
8 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
9 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	ITLOG

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	ITLOG
2	HARI NG SELDA
3	CROSS ROADS
4 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
5	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
6 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
7 (DTS)	E.T.
8	ICE AGE
9	EVIL WOMAN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	TIME MACHINE
2	CROSS ROADS
3	ITLOG
4	ICE AGE
5 (SDDS)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
6	HARI NG SELDA
7 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
8	E.T.

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	BLADE 2
3 (DTS)	ICE AGE
4	ITLOG
5 (SDDS)	E.T

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	HARI NG SELDA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	HARI NG DELDA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	TEMPTRESS
Lords	UOD SA LAMAN
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	BLADE 2
3	ITLOG

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
2	TIME MACHINE
3	ITLOG
4	HARI NG SELDA
5	ICE AGE

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1
2
3
4
5
6

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ITLOG

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ITLOG

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1
2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ITLOG
3 (DTS)	E.T.

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	HARI NG SELDA
2 (DTS)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
3 (DOLBY)	TIME MACHINE
4	E.T.

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	HARI NG SELDA
2 (DOLBY)	TIME MACHINE
3 (DTS)	E.T.
4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	BANDITS
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	HARI NG SELDA
3 (DOLBY)	D-TOX
4 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	HARI NG SELDA
2	TIME MACHINE
3	ITLOG
4 (DTS)	BLADE 2

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	TIME MACHINE
2	HARI NG SELDA
3 (DTS)	ICE AGE
4	ITLOG
5	E.T.

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	E.T.
3	TIME MACHINE

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	E.T.
2	HARI NG SELDA
3	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	ICE AGE
2	EVA
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	HARI NG SELDA
2	ICE AGE
3	RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	HARI NG SELDA
2 (DTS)	ITLOG

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BIBINGKA
2	BANDITS
3	HARI NG SELDA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

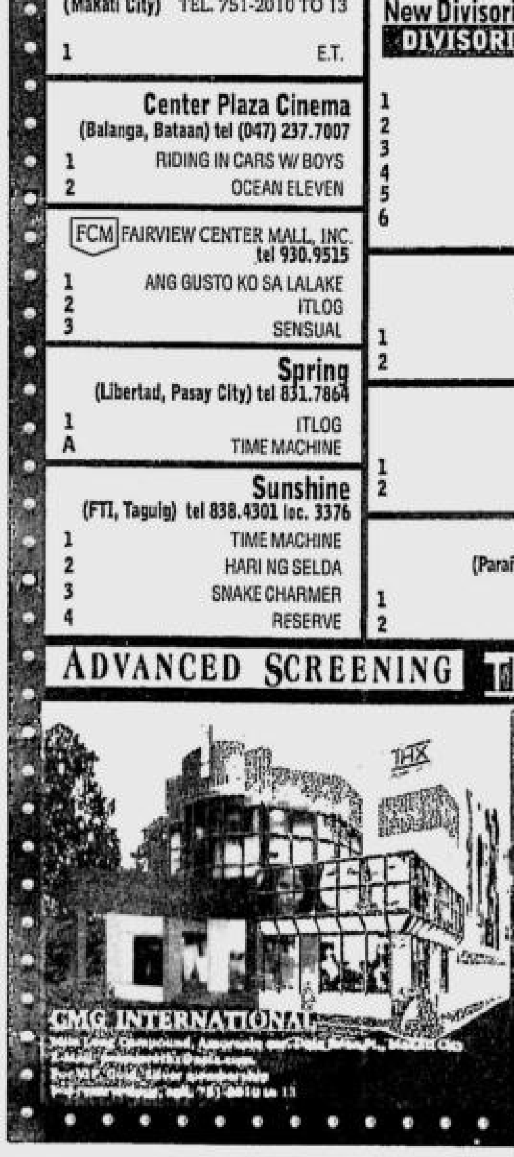
1	ICE AGE
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	D-TOX
4	HARI NG SELDA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

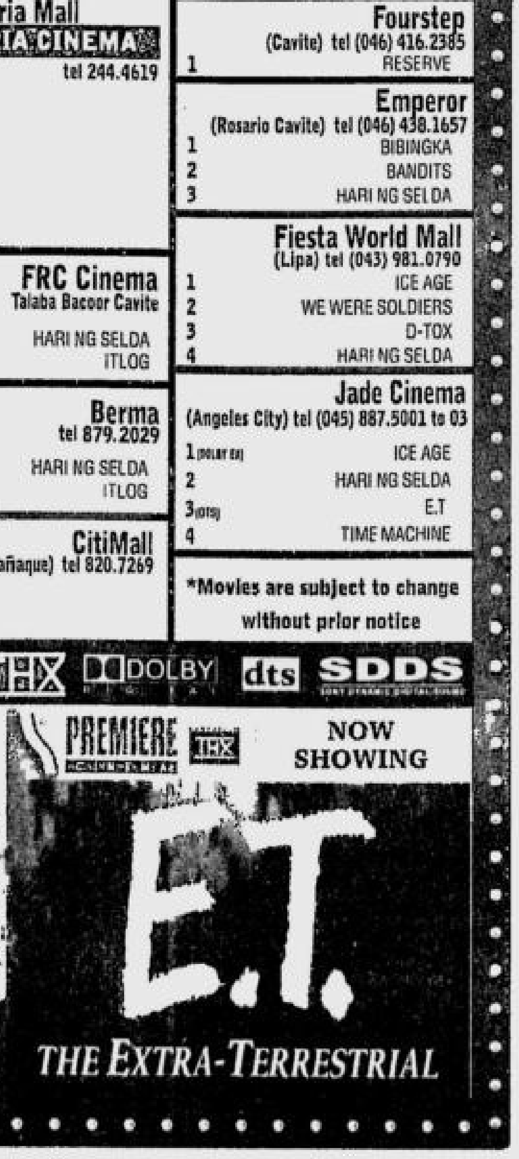
1 (DOLBY EX)	ICE AGE
2	HARI NG SELDA
3 (DTS)	E.T
4	TIME MACHINE

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS



CMG INTERNATIONAL
[illegible]



CINEMAS @ Robinsons Malls
MOVIEWORLD

NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	TIME MACHINE
2	E.T.
3	ICE AGE
4	BLADE 2
5	CROSS ROADS
6	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
7	HARI NG SELDA
8	JOHN Q
9	EVIL WOMAN
10	ITLOG

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	BLADE 2
2	E.T.
3	HARI NG SELDA
4	EVIL WOMAN
5	CROSS ROADS
6	ICE AGE
7	TIME MACHINE

Metro East -
Marcos hway
687- 8193 / 8280

1	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
2	ICE AGE
3	CROSS ROADS
4	E.T.
5	BLADE 2
6	HARI NG SELDA
7	TIME MACHINE
8	EVIL WOMAN

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	E.T.
2	ICE AGE
3	EVIL WOMAN
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	BLADE 2
6	CROSS ROADS
7	TIME MACHINE
8	HARI NG SELDA

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	BLADE 2
2	HARI NG SELDA
3	ICE AGE
4	ITLOG
5	E.T.
6	EVIL WOMAN

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	JIMMY NEUTRON
4	D-TOX
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
6	RAT RACE

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	ICE AGE
3	HARI NG SELDA
4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5	EVA
6	E.T.

Star Mills-
Sn Fernando, Pamp
875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	ICE AGE
2	TIME MACHINE
3	E.T.
4	ITLOG
5	CROSS ROADS
6	CROSS ROADS

malabon citisquare-
soon to open.

Late Night Screening
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http://www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

SHOWS

The Dawn holds series of concerts

AFTER their six-city tour of the United States, The Dawn is back in the country with a series of shows.

The five-man band will perform April 19 at Padi's Point in Metropolis, Alabang; April 20 in Angeles, Pampanga; and April 26 at Hard Rock Café, Makati.

The Dawn is composed of drummer Jun Boy Leonor, bassist Carlos Balcells, guitarists Francis Reyes and Atsushi Sushi Matsuura, vocalist Jett Pangan and session keyboardist Dodo Fernandez.

Even before the term boy band was coined, The Dawn was already charting hits like "Enveloped Ideas," "Salamat," "Love Will Set Us Free" and "Iisang Bangka Tayo."

The group has also earned honors from the Catholic Mass Media Awards, Awit, Aliw and the NU Rock Awards.

The Dawn will also mount a major concert next month.

Side A at Suburbia

START the week right as the country's premier band Side A performs a smashing lineup of favorite hits on Mondays at Suburbia in Malate.

The pop quintet of Joey Generoso, Kelly Badon, Naldy Gonzales, Joey Benin and Ernie Severino returns to the Suburbia stage on Wednesday, when they perform back-to-back with the R&B band Escape.

Enjoy retro tunes with Mulatto on Tuesdays and soul music with 7th Soul on Thursdays.

Weekends heat up with Freeverse and Power M on Fridays, while Pido With Take One takes centerstage on Saturdays, with performances of Q&A on April 20 and Wiseguys on April 27.

Suburbia is at 1718 M. Adriatico st., Malate, Manila. For reservations, call 450-1658 or 86.

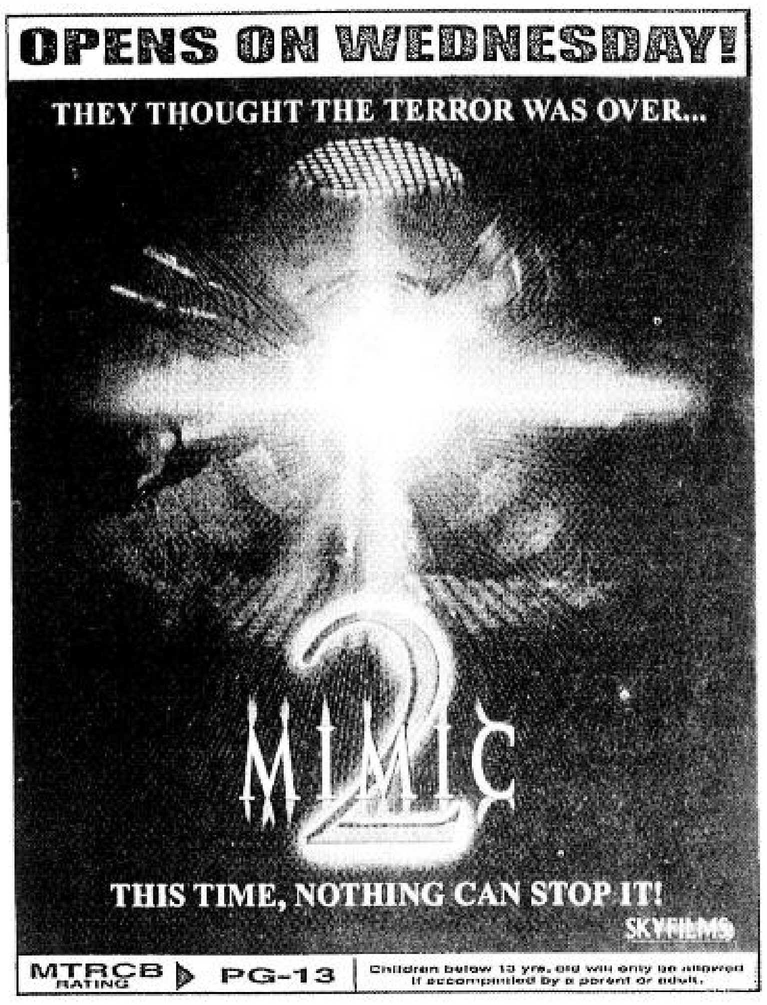
THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

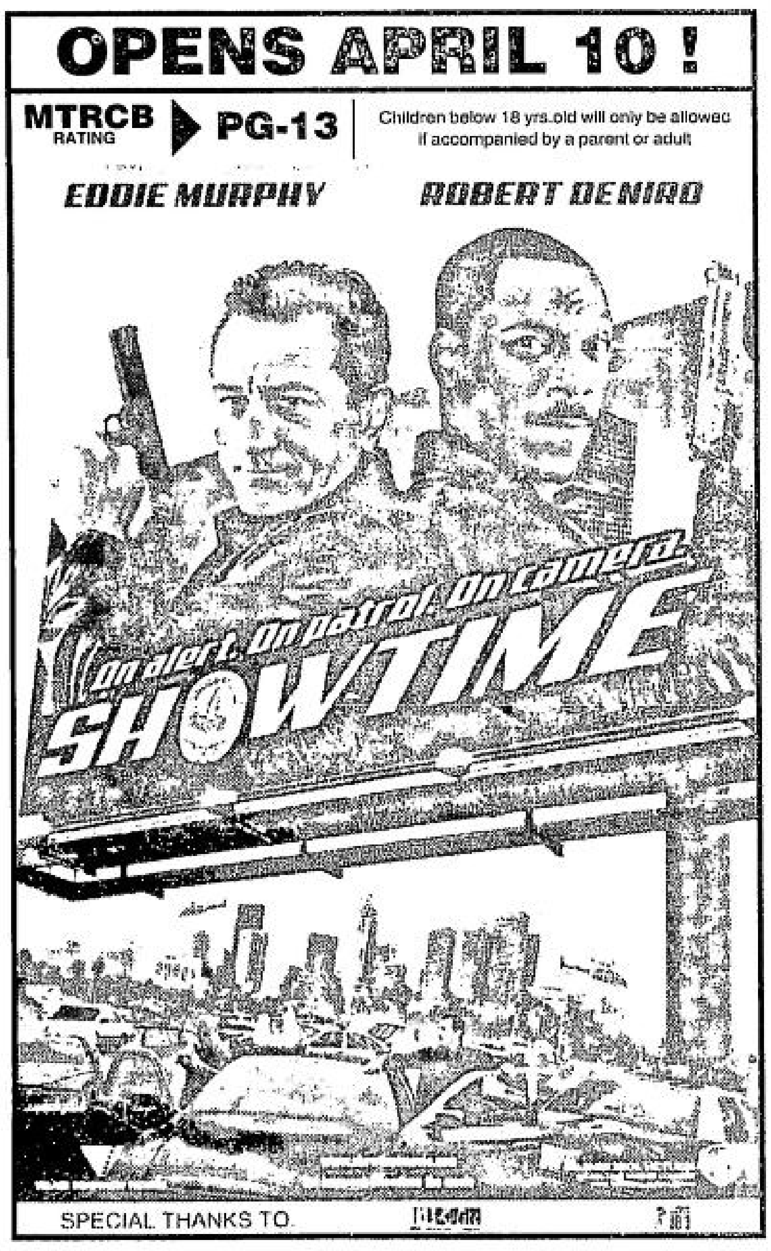
ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	CROSS ROAD
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	HARI NG SELDA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	BLADE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ICE AGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	E.T.
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	EVIL WOMAN
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	BLADE 2
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	HARI NG SELDA
ODEON-2	TIME MACHINE
ROBEN	ITLOG
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	HARRY POTTER / PHOSSED
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ITLOG
REMAR	HARI NG SELDA
REMAR-2	ITLOG
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HARI NG SELDA
B	ITLOG
C	GOT 2 BELIEVE
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	ICE AGE
CINEMA-2	E.T.
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HARI NG SELDA
CINEMA-2	BLADE 2
CINEMA-3	ITLOG
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EVIL WOMAN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HARI NG SELDA
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	ICE AGE
CINEMA-8	QUEEN OF DAMNED
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	E.T.
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BLADE 2
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	ICE AGE
CINEMA-12	CROSS ROADS
CINEMA-14	TIME MACHINE
CINEMA-15	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	CROSS ROAD
CINEMA-2	E.T.
CINEMA-3	BLADE 2
CINEMA-4	COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO
CINEMA-5	EVIL WOMAN
CINEMA-6	ICE AGE
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

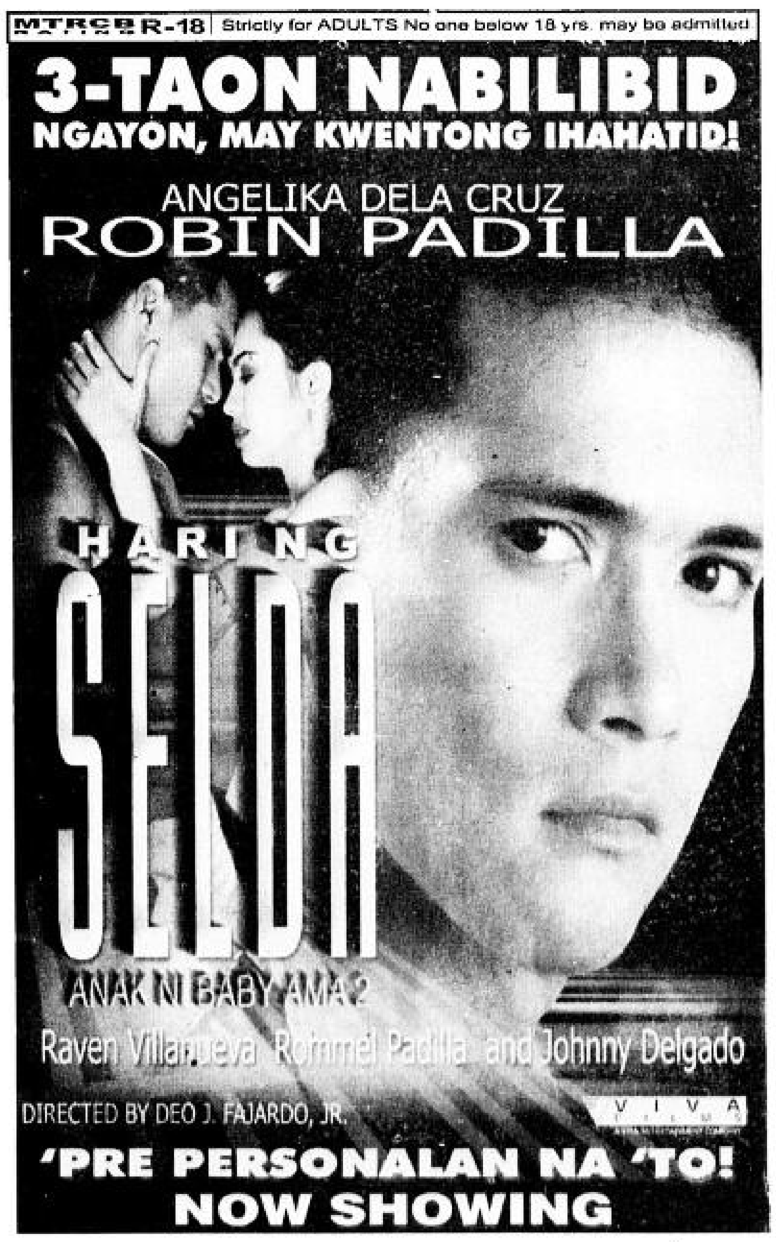
POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

CROSS ROADS - P 13 11:20, 1:35, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40, 9:45	E.T. - GP 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	BLADE 2 - P 13 12:40, 3:05, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO - P 13 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40	EVIL WOMAN - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	ICE AGE - GP 11:15, 1:00, 2:45, 4:30, 6:15, 8:00, 9:50

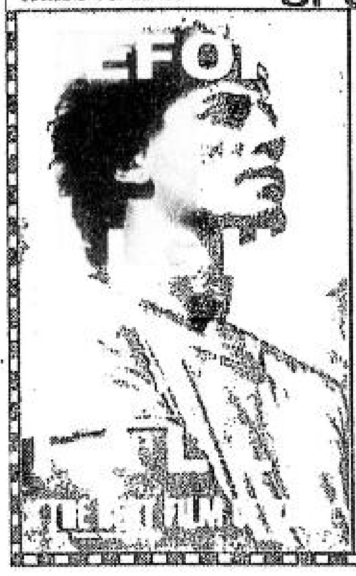
Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.


OPENS ON WEDNESDAY!
THEY THOUGHT THE TERROR WAS OVER...
MIMIC 2
THIS TIME, NOTHING CAN STOP IT!
SKYFILMS
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.


OPENS APRIL 10 !
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 18 yrs.old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
EDDIE MURPHY ROBERT DENIRO
On alert. On patrol. On camera.
SHOWTIME
SPECIAL THANKS TO.


MTRCB R-18 | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted
3-TAON NABILIBID
NGAYON, MAY KWENTONG IHAHATID!
ANGELIKA DELA CRUZ
ROBIN PADILLA
HARING SELDA
ANAK NI BABY AMA 2
Raven Villanueva Rommel Padilla and Johnny Delgado
DIRECTED BY DEO J. FAJARDO, JR.
VIVA FILMS
'PRE PERSONALAN NA 'TO!
NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.
Friends don't let friends date psycho women from hell.
EVIL WOMAN
Wild, sexy new comedy!
'Evil Woman' NOW SHOWING !
In the tradition of their hit laugh-a-minute movies, Jason Biggs of AMERICAN PIE, Jack Black of SHALLOW HAL and Steve Zahn of DR. DOLITTLE 2 join comic forces in the hot and sexy new comedy from Columbia Pictures, EVIL WOMAN.
Darren (Biggs), Wayne (Zahn) and J.D. (Black) have been best of friends since 5th grade. They swore nothing could come between them...un til she came along.
Judith (Amanda Peet) sizzles with sex appeal but is really a cold-hearted and manipulative bitch. She digs her claws into Darren and snatches him from the friendship!
Darren must be rescued at all cost from the clutches of the evil woman, launching a series of side-splitting misadventures. (Rated R for nudity and sexual humor.)


AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM - GREENBELT
Art Film
OPENS APRIL 10 (Wed.)
Javier Bardem Olivier Martinez Andrea Di Stefano
Johnny Depp & Sean Penn
"'Before Night Falls' is rapturous, intoxicating filmmaking... Don't miss it! Javier Bardem gives a mesmerizing and inspired performance!" -Rex Reed, New York Observer
"'Before Night Falls' is a potent, visually stunning masterpiece! Javier Bardem gives a riveting, emotionally naked performace." -Guy Flatley, Interview
WINNER!
Best Male Lead , 2001 Independent Spirit Awards
Grand Jury Prize, Best Actor , 2000 Venice International Film Festival
Best Actor (Bardem), 2000 National Board of Review
Best Actor (Bardem), 2001 National Society of Film Critics
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R) Strictly For Adults
WARNING! This film is unanimously rated R-18 for its adult thematic content which is Homosexuality and scenarios of NUDITY.
NOKIA SKYFILMS INQUIRER

AYALA CINEMAS
GLORIETTA 1 & 4 / GREENBELT
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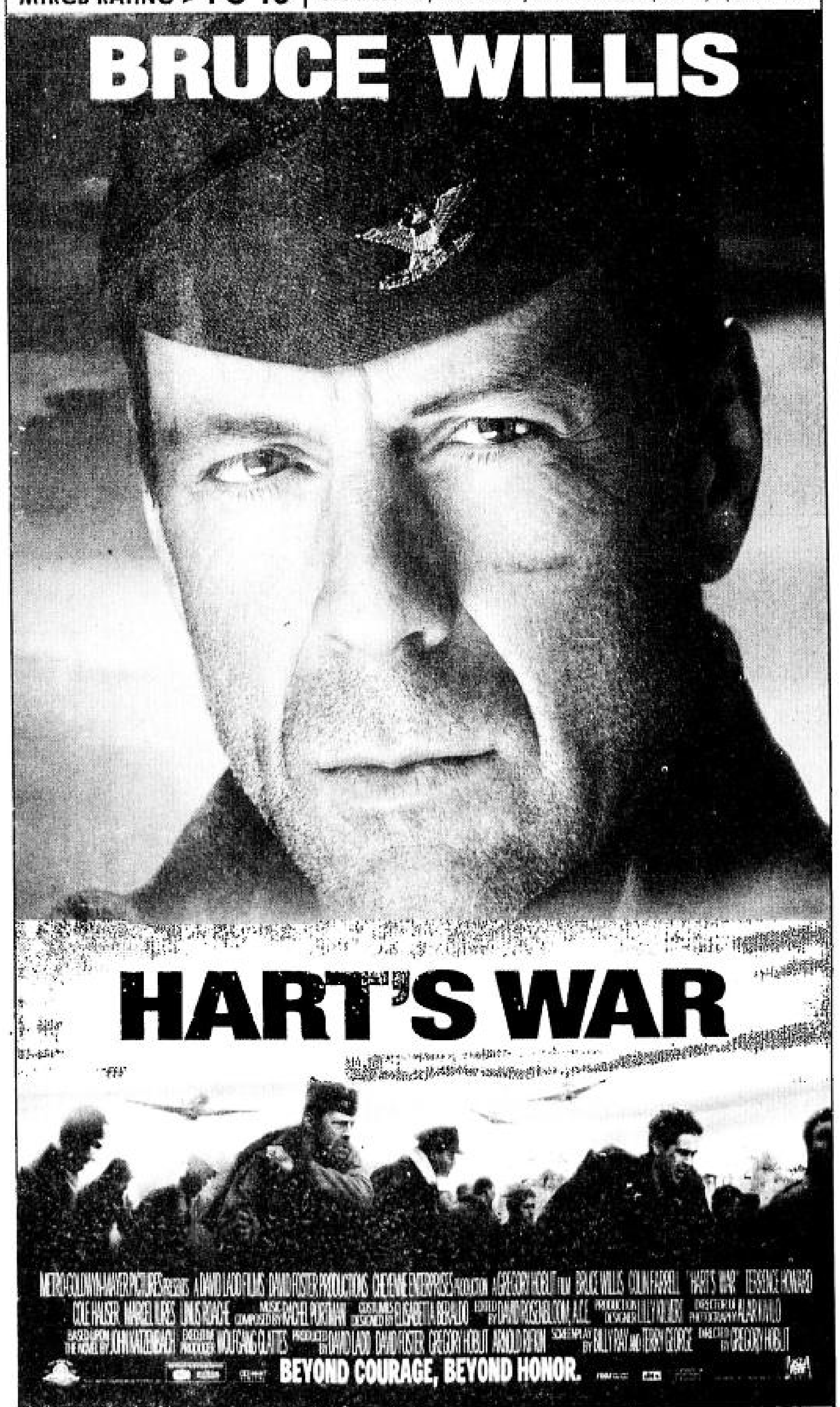
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG 13 | Children below 13 years old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
BRUCE WILLIS
HART'S WAR
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OPENS APRIL 10 !

Focus on Asian films

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ASIAN movies may not have pulled off another "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" feat at last month's Oscar awards, but they're still doing fine on the world scene, thank you. Some updates:

The big Thai blockbuster, "Suriyothai," is being readied for international release. The historical film has earned a record 600 million baht ($13.6M) in Thailand, and is also expected to click with audiences worldwide.

The lavish costume drama is based on the life and legend of Suriyothai, a 16th-century queen. It weaves a story of palace intrigue, corruption and war fought on elephant back.

To make sure that the movie does well in the west, its director, **Chatrichalerm Yukol**, has asked his friend, **Francis Ford Coppola**, to shorten his 185-minute production to a 150-minute international version.

The new version of "Suriyothai" will be released internationally soon by Coppola's own distribution company. It will be shown in the Thai language with English subtitles. Thai film people hope that the film does well abroad, to pave the way for other Thai productions to break into the international market, just like " Crouching Tiger . . ." made other Taiwanese and Chinese films more popular in the west.

What can Filipino film people learn from the experience of "Suriyothai" to date? First, that big, well-conceived productions can make a killing at the box office.

The film's domestic gross in dollars translates into something like P650M—a huge fortune by local standards.

And the film's global earnings should push that gross to more than P1B, in Philippine peso terms. That's much, much more than the P100M that only a few super-blockbusters have made in these parts. And remember, we're talking of only one film.

Sure, "Suriyothai" cost an arm and a leg to produce, but its gross receipts to date have made the huge expense worth it. And we aren't even factoring in the non-financial benefits of the film's success in terms of prestige, cultural enhancement, national pride and tourism prospects.

Second lesson to be learned: think global. The Thai film's domestic success may be duplicated or even surpassed by its international release, and it could open doors abroad for other quality Thai productions, which have thus far had limited success only on the festival and art-house circuits.

For their part, South Korean movies are also hitting it big at home, competing more dynamically against foreign film imports. Younger, more cosmopolitan directors now enjoy better funding and marketing, and more viewers patronize their productions.

The most popular film in South Korea last year was the homegrown "Friends," which was seen by 2.6 million viewers. In contrast, the biggest foreign hit, "Shrek," was watched by "only" 1.1 million viewers.

South Korean movies have also been doing better in international filmfests: "Bad Guy" was one of the most talked-about entries to the last Berlin filmfest, and "JSA" copped the top prize at the Deauville filmfest in France.

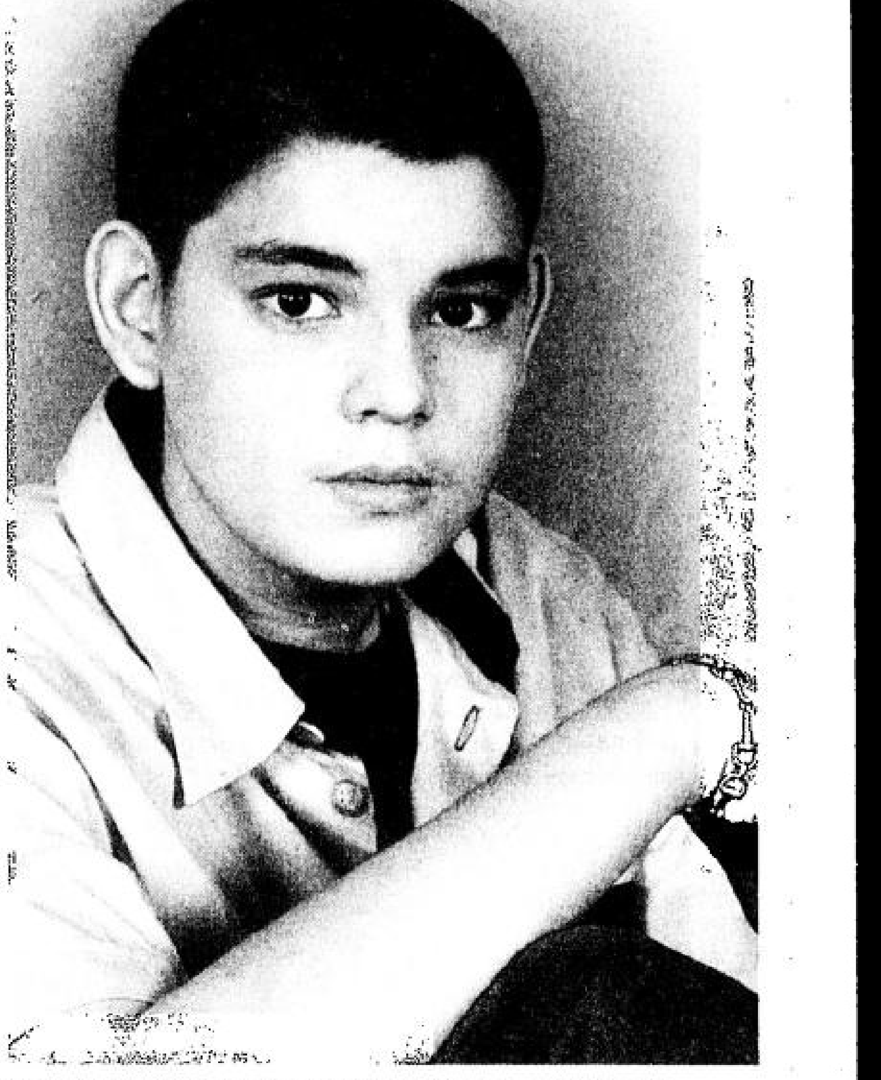
Feedback

FROM **Mai Francisco**: "I was disgusted with what I watched recently on 'Kakasa Ka Ba?' One segment was sort of a challenge to walk around a mall fountain naked (with a towel) in exchange for some money.

"To those involved in the show: Why ask those people to do that? You should have respected their dignity. How would you react if someone asked you to walk around naked (well, with a towel), with just the televiewers and the people in the mall *lang naman* as your audience? I don't think it's proper to make fun of those people, to exploit them.

"And you should have shown some sensitivity to the people watching. You may reason out that you didn't force those people to do what they did, but it was still offensive, and not funny.

"I hope you use your position and talent to influence society in a positive way. Use the powerful influence of media with responsibility. Good luck, really, and I'm praying for you."



RICHARD Gutierrez, the newest star in an all-star family

Another Gutierrez tries to claim his share of fame

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

RICHARD Gutierrez, the other half of the Gutierrez twins, returns to show biz, this time as a teenage heartthrob.

Richard and his twin Raymond (now based in the US) started in show biz as child actors and commercial models. Remember their Nestlé twin ad?

Richard was only three years old when he made his movie debut in "Lahing Pikutin," with his dad **Eddie** and sister **Ruffa.**

Most of the movies he did also featured his dad, like the horror-drama thriller, "Takbo, Bilis, Takbo" as well as "Kambal Tuko" and "Feel na Feel." He also worked with the likes of **Susan Roces** and **Joey de Leon**.

Richard's last movie before he left show biz when he was nine was "Takbo, Tili, Talon" from Seiko Films. He studied briefly in the US, but the lure of the klieg lights proved too strong for him.

Now 18, Richard recently inked a two-year build-up contract with GMA 7, where he will be seen in two weekly shows. He was launched as a regular member of "Click" and a mainstay of the soap "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin."

Richard and the other cast members of "Click" had their fans day at Limits Disco and the event was aired last Saturday. The new batch also includes other celebrity kids like **Brian Revilla,** son of **Bong Revilla Jr.** and **Lani Mercado,** and **AJ Eigenmann,** son of **Michael de Mesa** and **Gina Alajar**. They will join "Click" regulars who include **Danica Sotto** and **James Blanco**, among others.

Richard's mom, **Annabelle Rama**, was once also an actress. Richard's only sister, Ruffa, has also made a name for herself in the business.

'Seven Seasons'

IT'S not a new summer drink. "Seven Seasons" is the summer sizzler of GMA 7, which launched new programs during a poolside summer party last Thursday.

The line-up of new shows and stars is impressive, proof that GMA is ready to give its rival network a run for its millions.

Action star **Rudy Fernandez** will do comedy this time, with **Rosanna Roces,** in the primetime sitcom "Daboy en da Girl."

It has another grand production, the soap "Kung Mawawala Ka," loaded with a powerhouse cast led by **Eddie Garcia** and **Hilda Koronel**, directed by **Joel Lamangan**. Also in the cast are **Gloria Diaz, Ara Mina, Alessandra de Rossi, Princess Punzalan, Sunshine Dizon, Cogie Domingo** and **Liza Lorena**.

New hosts will also be introduced in the Sunday noontime variety show "SOP," joining **Regine Velasquez, Janno Gibbs, Ogie Alcasid** and **Jaya,** among others.

"Seven Seasons" also brings seven new movies to be shown on TV for the first time, on Saturday night's "Pinoy Blockbusters," starting with the return of **Vilma Santos** in the made-for-TV movie "Bugso," costarring **Tirso Cruz III** and **Ian de Leon** and directed by **Christopher de Leon**.

GMA brings back the phenomenal telenovela, "Mari Mar," which brought Mexican actress **Thalia** to international attention.

Meanwhile, a new *barkada* takes over "Click" and another set of teenage friends will be introduced in "Kahit Kailan."

Erratum

IN MY page 1 article about **Rico Yan**, "A funeral fit for a president for an actor who wanted to be one" (Inquirer, April 5, 2002), I mentioned that Yan's death sparked nationwide interest and eclipsed news on the deaths of "16 Filipinos in Dubai, of National Artists **Lucio San Pedro** and **Levi Celerio**, of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and of Hollywood actor **Dudley Moore**."

Reader **Celmar Garcia** pointed out it was the Queen Mother who died. We apologize for the error.

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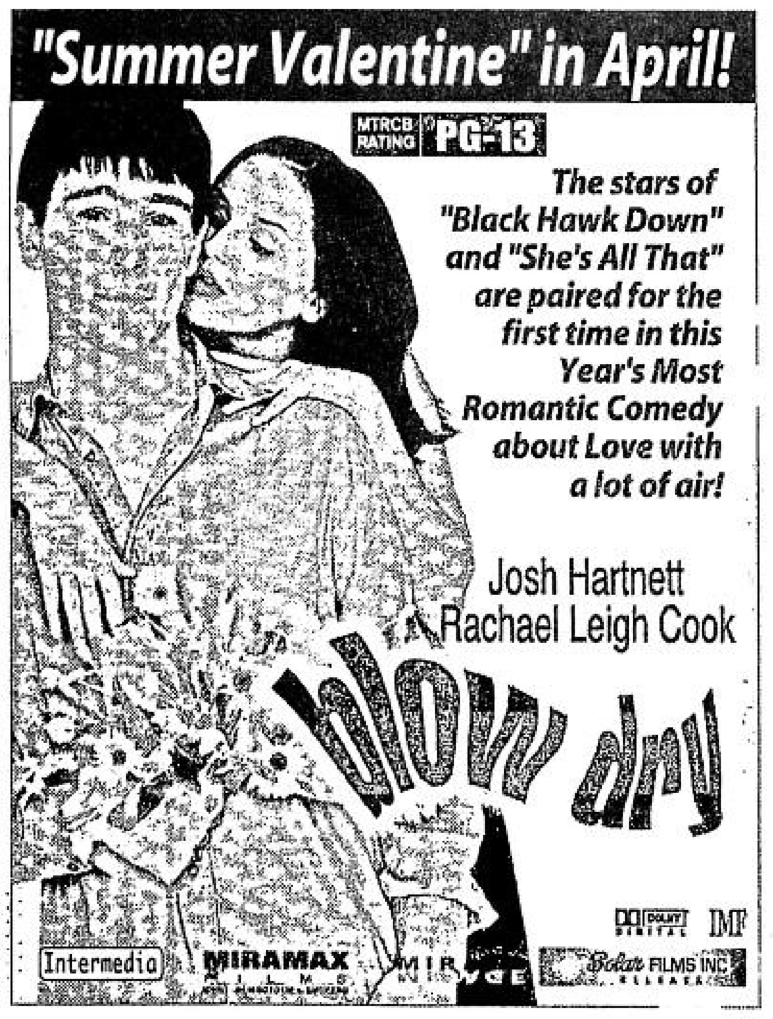

"Summer Valentine" in April!
MTRCB RATING PG-13
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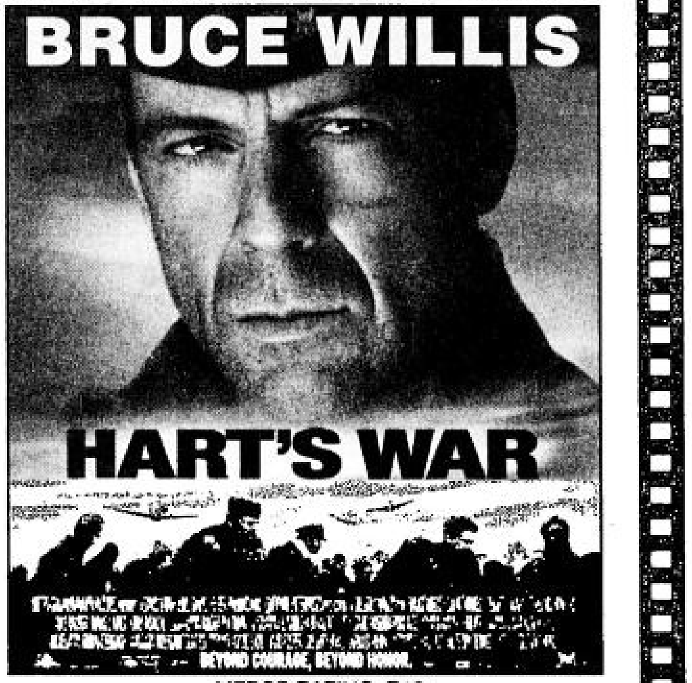

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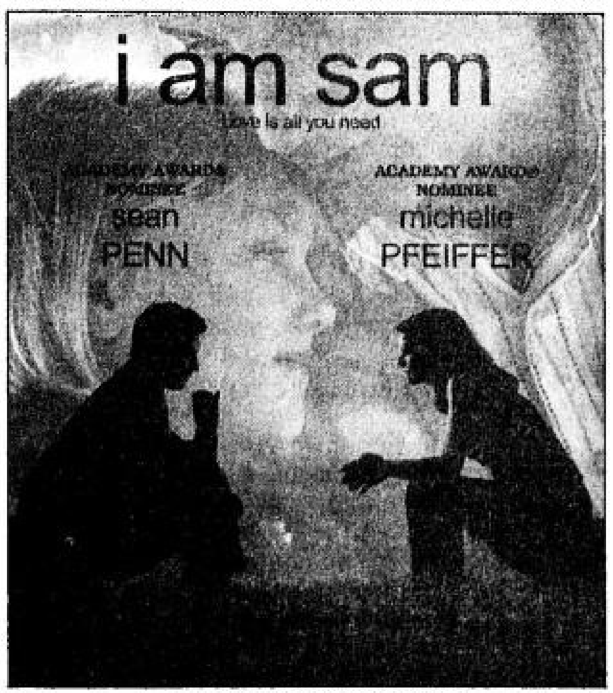
MTRCB RATING: P13
Invitational K-Lite Screening on
April 8, 2002 • 7:30 pm
SM Megamall Cinema 1
Regular showing on April 10 at the SM CINEMAS.



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SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING
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DIRECTED BY AL TANTAY
VIVA
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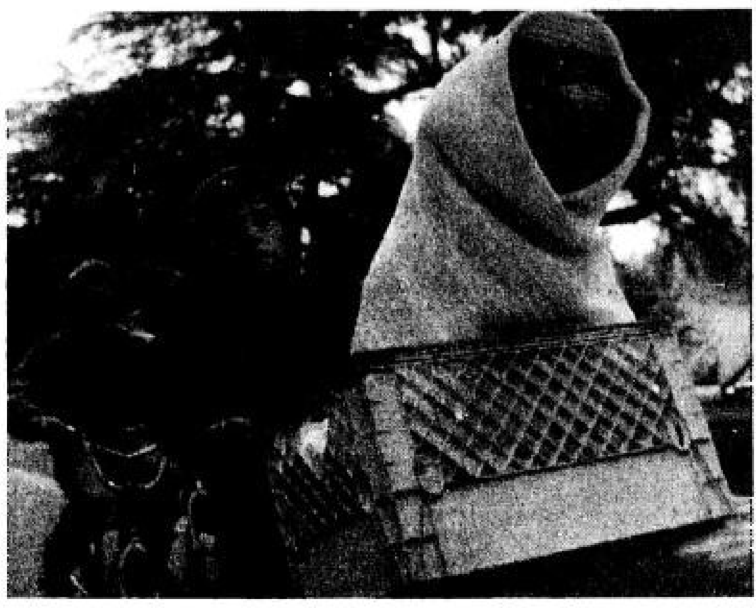
ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**



ALL IN THE FAMILY. "Brothers" Henry Thomas and Robert McNaughton escape with ET.

'E.T.'

Better, more magical, 20 years later

By Paul Daza

REVIEW

OF THE hundreds of movies I've seen since I became a movie buff many years ago, my personal favorite is still "E.T. The Extra Terrestrial," first shown in Metro Manila in January 1983.

The story of an alien who is accidentally stranded on Earth and is befriended by a sensitive boy named Elliott, "E.T." is a movie I know intimately because I've seen it more than 50 times.

Now comes the 20th anniversary re-issue, which includes never before-seen footage, enhanced visual effects, and a digitally remastered soundtrack. If we're to believe the publicity, this means that the 2002 version of "E.T." should, at the very least, be more technically polished than the 1982 version. At that time, computers had not yet revolutionized the filmmaking process, and many special effects shots in the movie, especially those depicting himself, weren't as realistic as they could have been.

Now there's nothing that can't be done by computers, especially if a decent budget is available. Since "E.T." is one of the most beloved and successful movies ever made, there was no doubt producer-director Steven Spielberg could give the benevolent alien a 21st Century facelift worthy of one of the biggest box-office stars in the galaxy.

Spot the changes

So, is the new "E.T." really an improvement, or does it tarnish the memory of a classic?

I'm pleased to report that the enhanced "E.T." that's in theaters now really is better than the original. Practically all the shots showing the alien botanist have been redone with the aid of computers, making the creature far more expressive and agile than he was in 1982. Originally, ET was a cable-controlled puppet created by Carlo Rambaldi, and it was very expressive and articulate for its time. If it wasn't, would millions of men, women and children have been moved to tears by the finale?

The new, computer-generated version of ET is designed to enhance Rambaldi's creation, not replace it. You're not even supposed to know that an "improvement" has been made. Fans who have seen the movie countless times, however, will immediately spot the changes.

The scene where Gertie (Drew Barrymore) dresses up the alien in girl clothes is so much funnier now because ET's "acting" is more refined and comic.

Another example is the goodbye scene: The look on ET's face as the kids say farewell to him is even more heartbreaking now than it was before.

Lifelike

As for ET's agility, the improvements are most obvious in scenes showing him from head to toe: ET's abandonment in the forest, and a suspenseful but humorous scene which shows the alien falling into a bathtub while Elliott is on the phone.

In the original, the scene where ET is running toward his spaceship was quite crude: It was a puppet on wheels being pushed through the forest and looked like ET was on a skateboard. Now, thanks to computer animation, a very lifelike, agitated ET leaps and bounds after his fleeing ship.

In the original, you hardly saw ET's webbed feet. In the 2002 re-issue, you see more of them doing more things.

Two scenes shot in 1982 but never seen by the general public until now have been reinstated to enrich the movie. These include the aforementioned bathtub scene, which shows that ET also had a mischievous streak in him, not to mention a competitive streak: After Elliott (Henry Thomas) proudly concludes that he is taller than his new pet, ET elongates his neck for the first time and surprises the boy.

Then there's an additional scene showing Mary (Dee Wallace), her son Michael (Robert MacNaughton) and Gertie in the family car looking for Elliott on Halloween night. The scene not only shows us how wild American kids are on Halloween, it also reinforces the adorable Drew Barrymore's characterization of Gertie as a snitch incapable of keeping a secret.

Subtle

The other changes which Spielberg has made to "E.T." are more subtle. In the dialogue, the word "terrorist" has been replaced by "hippie," and a line has been thrown in during the scientists' siege explaining that ET "has six nucleotides" in his DNA as compared to the four which human beings have.

Visually, the other changes include fancier exhaust fumes for the alien spacecraft, and a re-doing of all the shots showing bicycles flying.

A major error in continuity has been fixed. In the scene where ET places his finger on Elliott's forehead at the end, the two angles Spielberg used to shoot the scene in the original didn't match because ET used different hands during different takes when he said "I'll be right here" to Elliott. Now, the mistake has been fixed, and only one hand is used for the memorable gesture.

Surprisingly, there are some shots which Spielberg didn't re-do even though they could have further improved the film. In the climactic bicycle chase, for instance, there are a couple of shots where it's obvious that the kid in the red sweater and hood biking with ET in the basket isn't Henry Thomas because he's just too huge!

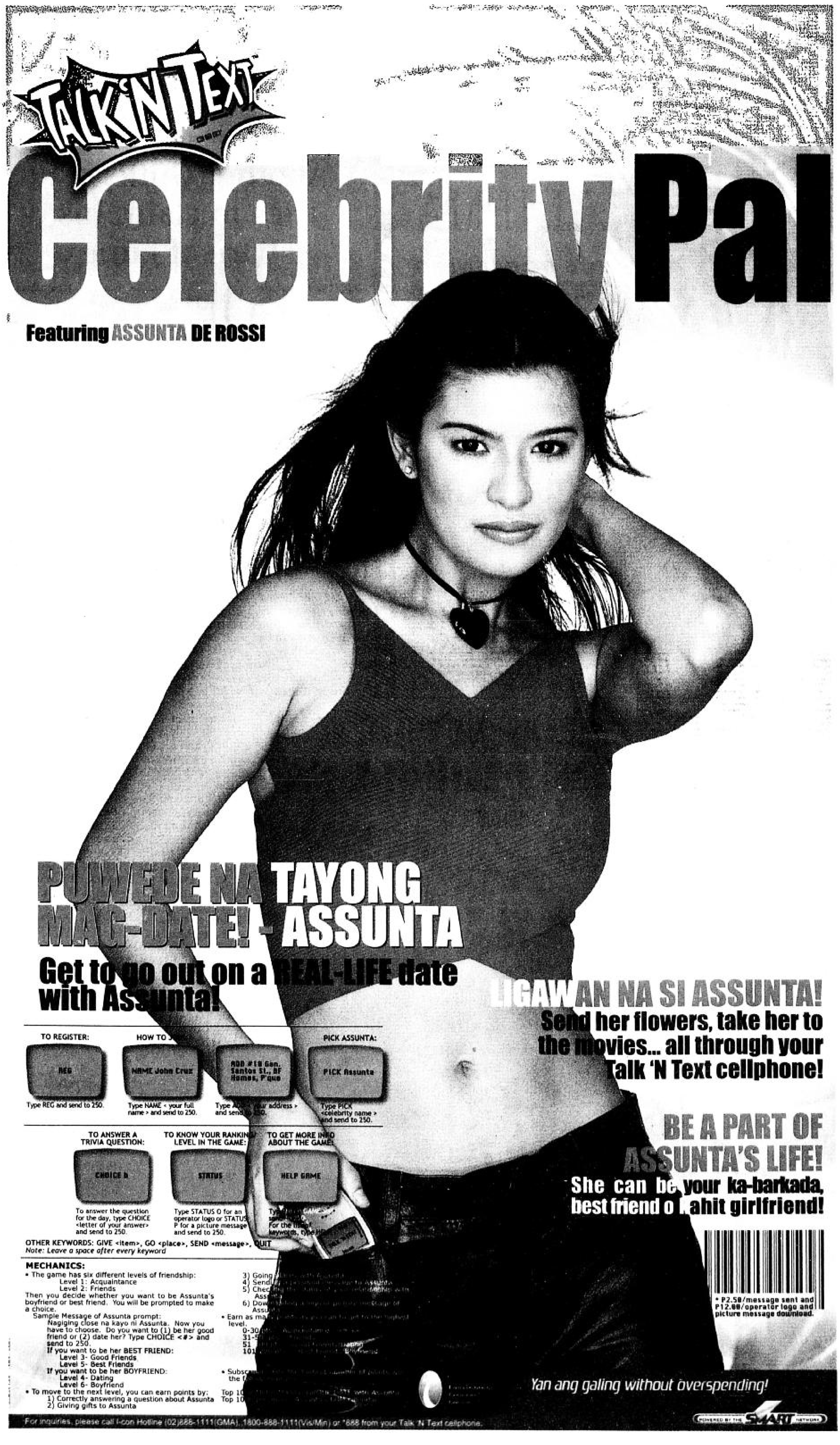
Miracle

As a whole, however, the new "E.T." is more magical and more moving than the original. I still get goose bumps when the bicycle ET and Elliott are riding on Halloween night soars over the forest trees past a dazzling full moon, and there is again a lump in my throat when ET uses the word "ouch" to express the pain he felt when he had to leave Elliott and return home.

Today's kids will certainly appreciate this version of "E.T." far more than the kids of 1982 appreciated the original. Take them to "ET" to let them know that it's possible for just one movie to make them feel every human emotion possible, from fear to awe, happiness to heartbreak.

This is even more amazing when your realize that "E.T." doesn't have any villains or violence.

At 20 years old, "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" is still a miracle movie, one that hasn't lost any of its magic.



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PICK Assunta
CHOICE b
STATUS
HELP GAME

TO REGISTER: Type REG and send to 250.

HOW TO: Type NAME < your full name > and send to 250.

Type ADD < your address > and send to 250.

PICK ASSUNTA: Type PICK <celebrity name > and send to 250.

TO ANSWER A TRIVIA QUESTION: To answer the question for the day, type CHOICE <letter of your answer> and send to 250.

TO KNOW YOUR RANKING LEVEL IN THE GAME: Type STATUS O for an operator logo or STATUS P for a picture message and send to 250.

TO GET MORE INFO ABOUT THE GAME: Type HELP GAME and send to 250. For the list of keywords, type HELP

OTHER KEYWORDS: GIVE <item>, GO <place>, SEND <message>, QUIT
Note: Leave a space after every keyword

MECHANICS:
- The game has six different levels of friendship:
  Level 1: Acquaintance
  Level 2: Friends

Then you decide whether you want to be Assunta's boyfriend or best friend. You will be prompted to make a choice.
Sample Message of Assunta prompt:
Nagiging close na kayo ni Assunta. Now you have to choose. Do you want to (1) be her good friend or (2) date her? Type CHOICE <#> and send to 250.
If you want to be her BEST FRIEND:
Level 3- Good Friends
Level 5- Best Friends
If you want to be her BOYFRIEND:
Level 4- Dating
Level 6- Boyfriend
- To move to the next level, you can earn points by:
  1) Correctly answering a question about Assunta
  2) Giving gifts to Assunta
  3) Going
  4) Send
  5) Chec
  Ass
  6) Dow
  Assu
- Earn as ma
  level.
  0-30
  31-5
  51
  101
- Subsc
  the f

Top 10
Top 10

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Banks allowed to own stake in AMCs

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has eased its policy barring banks from holding any stake in an asset management company and is now willing to allow minority positions in order to facilitate the disposal of the financial sector's bad assets.

Banks, which have been requesting the BSP to soften its stance, argued that an equity interest would allow them to share in any possible upside when an asset management company disposes of the bad assets transferred from them.

The BSP, however, fearing banks would be placed in a conflict-of-interest position, supported a provision in the pending Special Purpose Asset Vehicle bill in Congress prohibiting banks from being a joint venture partner in an AMC.

An AMC or special asset purpose vehicle is an entity that will buy non-performing loans (NPLs) and foreclosed assets of a bank at steep discounts by issuing cash or subordinated notes, and will then sell these debts and assets to interested investors. The government is encouraging banks, burdened by a total of about P300 billion in bad loans and P160 billion in idle real estate, to unload these non-performing assets so more funds could be freed up for lending and, in turn, spur economic activity.

Many banks planning to go through the AMC or SPAV route have been waiting for the bill's passage in Congress before finalizing their asset disposal programs.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura had told reporters that monetary authorities made the policy shift last week after it realized that barring banks from owning a stake in an AMC would require a large amount of paperwork and red tape. This would make the purchase and sale of bank assets by an AMC too cumbersome.

Also, the BSP believed that it could put enough safeguards to prevent conflict of interest such as a ceiling on the level of bank equity in an AMC.

Buenaventura said that the BSP would still have to determine the appropriate equity cap but banks would probably be limited to a stake that would not allow them to recognize earnings but just receive dividends from the AMC.

The policy change of regulators has increased chances that Land Bank of the Philippines' request to enter into a 70-30 joint venture in favor of a foreign partner for the disposal of P15 billion to P20 billion of the government bank's bad assets would be approved.

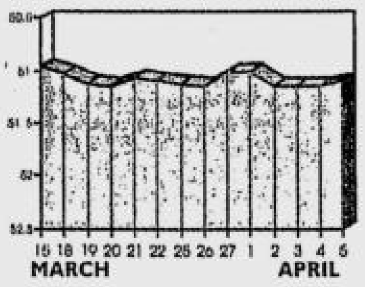
"It (Landbank's request) is something we will favorably consider now," Buenaventura said.

Currently, many foreign investment banks or foreign funds have engaged in talks to acquire, through the establishment of AMCs or SPAVs, Philippines banks' bad loans and other assets for about 20 centavos to 30 centavos per peso of asset. These groups include Cerberus Capital Ltd., Colony Capital, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Salomon Smith Barney, Lone Star, Lehmann Brothers and JP Morgan Chase.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P51.095 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 5, 2002

¥132.02 = $1
As of 5 p.m., April 5, 2002

GOLD: $301.30/301.80
per ounce Hong Kong, April 4, 2002

STOCK MARKET

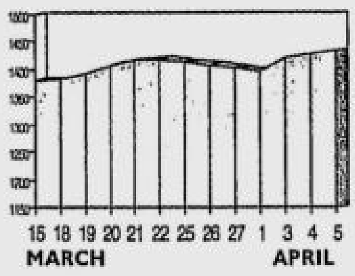
Follow-through buying seen

LOCALS stocks are still seen to benefit from follow-through buying this week after the favorable news brought by the credit ratings outlook upgrade on the Philippines by Standard & Poor's but are likewise becoming ripe for profit-taking.

The market is set to reopen tomorrow as today was declared by Malacañang as a non-working holiday.

DBS Vickers Securities associate director for sales Enrique Sta. Ana said the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index would likely trade between 1,380 and 1,450 as investors await some downward correction before accumulating more stocks.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

FOLLOW-THROUGH/ B4

Local bourse targets a dozen IPOs this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

AFTER years of drought, the Philippine Stock Exchange is starting to see interest in initial public offerings trickling back to the local bourse alongside an improving investor sentiment.

"I think we should target 10 to 12 more IPOs this year," PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco said on Friday.

Yuchengco said she expected more companies to debut on the local bourse this year as she pledged to overhaul the PSE's listing guidelines to make the equities market more attractive.

Newly appointed PSE listing committee co-chair Peter Favila, a former banker, said that based on his initial review of the listing guidelines, a lot of reforms were needed to make the listing environment more favorable.

This developed as trading volume in the PSE has improved from the meager P500 million average value turnout seen last year, at times hitting over P1 billion. The PSE has already extended trading up to 2:30 in the afternoon to take advantage of the improved market sentiment.

The PSE itself is bound to go public in the future in compliance with the securities law requiring its demutualization. But the PSE's IPO, according to PSE president Ernest Leung, would not be possible within this year.

Listing-related income is the PSE's biggest revenue source. The 74-percent fall in the PSE's net profit to P18.29 million in 2001 from a year ago, for instance, was due to the 57-percent slump in listing and processing fees.

During the last two years, there were some companies which had braved the bear market, but usually with an IPO size of less than

LOCAL/ B3

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Gov't sticking to growth targets despite rising world oil prices

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE PHILIPPINE government is sticking to its growth targets despite a jump in world crude prices that may push up inflation and, subsequently, interest rates.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the targets were still achievable given that the country now had become less dependent on petroleum for power, while other economic indicators could compensate for a possible hike in inflation since the targets were conservative in the first place.

"It's too premature at this time to revise them (growth targets). There's still room for maneuverability," Buenaventura told reporters.

However, he also said the 91-day treasury bill rate had likely bottomed out, although yields on longer-term government borrowings, specifically the 182-day and 364-day T-bill rates would likely fall further.

The 91-day T-bill rate—a basis for banks to price their loans—fell to a historic low of 5.174 percent last week.

The government has targeted a 4-percent to 4.5-percent growth in gross domestic product—a broad measure of economic activity—and a flat growth in exports this year.

The central bank is also pushing to revise its inflation target this year from a range of 5 percent to 6 percent to a new range of 4.5 percent to 5.5 percent.

The adjustment in inflation would have spurred an upward adjustment in other numbers.

BUENAVENTURA

Earlier, the Inter-Agency Development Budget Coordination Council agreed to review the government's economic targets in June with a bias toward adjusting the numbers positively by then.

The plan to revisit and consequently revise the targets followed the encouraging economic performance in the first two months of the year plus the signs of an earlier-than-expected recovery of the US economy.

Buenaventura on Friday said that he agreed with Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas' position not to change the inflation target, given that world oil prices had gone up sharply and might be sustained by a possible worsening of the Israel-Palestine conflict in the Middle East.

Already, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, whose members have protested further Israeli incursions into Palestine territory, have cut back production, prodding world oil prices to rise to about $27 per barrel, significantly higher than the government's projected $25 a barrel average.

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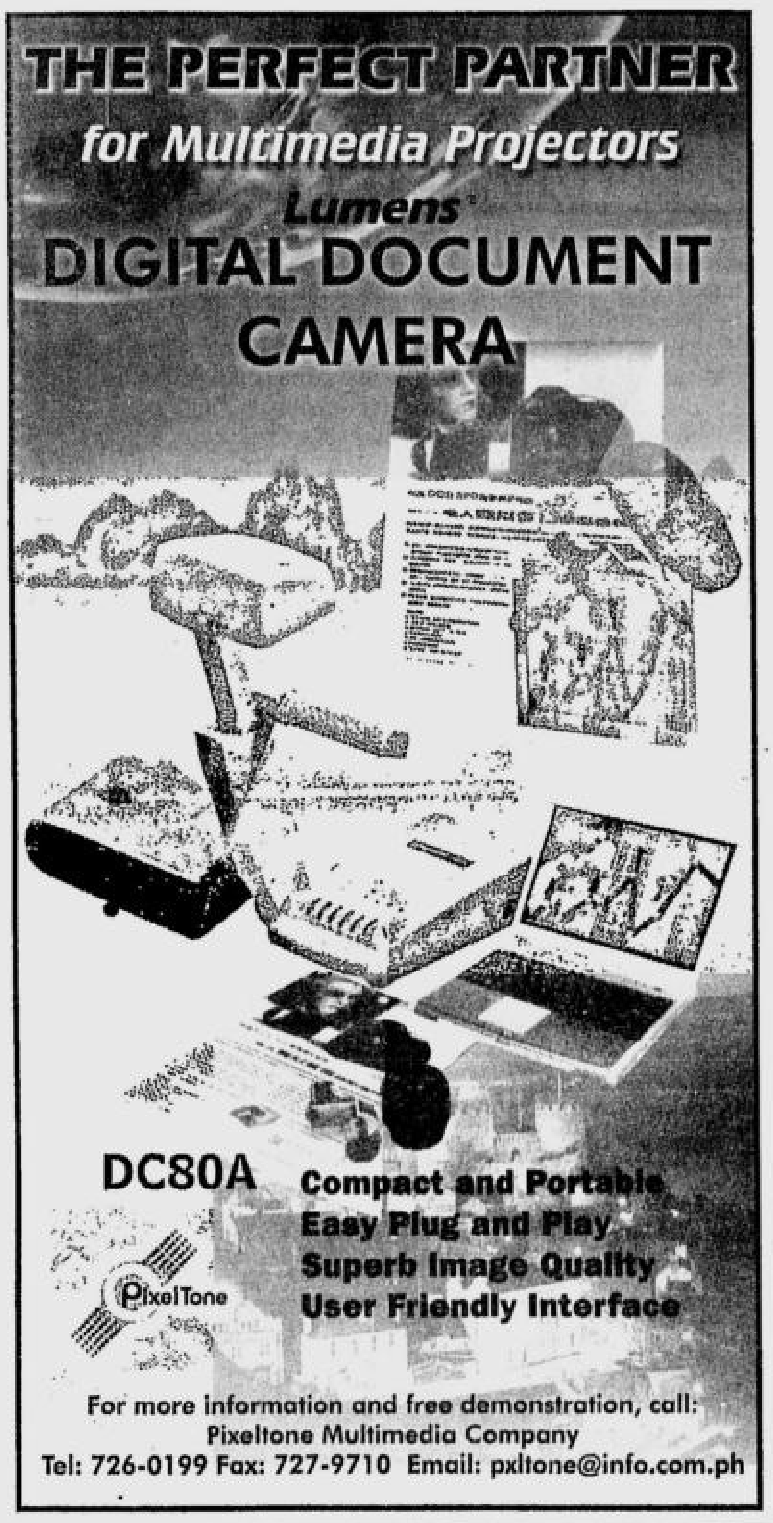

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Local cement makers scored for overpricing

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINES will still have one of the highest cement prices in Asia even if the Big Three cement manufacturers—Cemex, Holcim and Lafarge-Blue Circle—live up to their commitment to put a price cap of P125 to P135 per bag.

In a statement, the Confederation of Homeowners Association for Reforms in Governance and Environment (CHARGE), Consumers Union of the Philippines (CUP) and Philippine Consumer Watch Foundation said the Big Three's price cap was P45 to P55 higher than the average cement price of P70 to P90 per bag prevailing in Asia.

The consumer groups said the high prices set by local cement manufacturers was the reason why imports surged in the country. They said the high margins more than covered for the hefty transport costs (it costs P35 per bag to bring in cement from Indonesia) of the commodity.

They claimed that had Cemex, Holcim and Lafarge-Blue Circle agreed to sell at no more than P100 per bag—or double their export price of P50 per bag—there would be no incentive to bring in cement from abroad.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II has used the price cap commitment of the Big Three in exchange for his agency's unflinching bid to set high tariff walls and quotas on cement imports despite a rejection by the Tariff Commission.

Roxas claimed that this was the only time that cement prices have fallen, which only proved that a managed rather than a free market solution was more apt to the market's needs.

But consumer groups reminded Roxas that cement prices fell to a record low of P45 per bag in December 1998 shortly after the Big Three took over the operations of the country's major cement plants.

After the Big Three mothballed their inefficient plants to streamline operations, cement prices shot up to P95 per bag. Prices inched up to P105 per bag in 2000 when the Big Three claimed that cement imports surged.

The consumer groups claimed that the price cap commitment of the Big Three only proved their suspicion that the players were colluding to fix prices in the industry. They are poised to file a landmark cartel case against the Big Three using the Price Act of 1991 or Republic Act No. 7581 as basis.

The consumer groups claimed that the Big Three could easily control production, allocate the market among them, and dictate prices because they accounted for 89 percent of the domestic supply and 80 percent of total sales. They also accused the Big Three of booking their massive dollar investments in the local cement companies as loans in order to show losses and repatriate their operating profits.

No tariff protection for cement cartel

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE FIGHT over the foreign-owned cement cartel really worries me. When I built my house 40 years ago, cement cost P1.90 (that's one peso and 90 centavos) per bag. Now, we are supposed to be happy if a bag costs P125. How much will cement cost when my grandchildren start building their own homes?

With the high-powered media blitz mounted by the foreign-owned cement cartel seemingly over, let us now discuss the issues with little passion.

The foreign-owned cement cartel wants a protective tariff slapped on imports from Taiwan. It claims that the cheaper imports have captured 20 percent of the market and, as a result, the industry is hurting. (Let's pause to give three cheers to the importers for finding and bringing in cheap cement for the Filipino consumer!)

Cheap imports are not reason enough to impose the tariff. The foreign-owned cartel must show that Taiwan is dumping cement here. That is, Taiwan cement is being sold here at less than production cost, or at lower than market price in Taiwan, or the exports to the Philippines are subsidized by the Taiwanese government. The foreign-owned cement cartel has shown no proof of dumping.

The US government has raised the tariff on certain steel imports, not because the American steel industry is hurting as it actually is, but because the imports enjoy heavy government subsidies. The tariff levels the playing field.

The foreign-owned cement cartel claims that, although Philippine cement exports to Taiwan account for only 4 percent of the market, the Taiwanese government is poised to slap a tariff of 60 percent. This is probably because Philippine cement manufacturers are dumping cement in Taiwan. If so, the size of the market share actually captured is irrelevant.

But this is the biggest issue of all: Is there a foreign-owned cement cartel or not? This is the crucial question because a cartel, foreign or locally owned, is not only illegal. It is not allowed by the Constitution. Therefore, it should not be protected by a tariff.

What is a cartel? A cartel is when two or more manufacturers or suppliers agree to keep prices high by restricting competition. For example, two cement factories agree to sell only in their respective areas. Or, by manipulating supply, as Opec often does. Mothballing kilns in cement plants is one way to create supply shortage. But the most common device is merely to agree on fixed high prices.

I know a cartel when I see one. For most of my career, I fought the fire insurance cartel, the longest-running cartel in the country. We in the insurance brokers' association sued the cartel as being unconstitutional. The case became moot when the Insurance Commission, in line with the Asean Free Trade Agreement, pulled the legal underpinnings from under the cartel about five years ago.

Is there a cement cartel? You bet there is, and foreign-owned at that. I do not care what Neda says to the contrary. (By the way, when did Neda become a cartel buster?)

The footprints are all over. Listen to Secretary Mar Roxas, "Even academics recognize that, in the case of the cement industry, deregulation and trade liberalization, while necessary, are not sufficient to ensure that markets perform efficiently and that their outcomes are reasonably equitable." Here is a clear proof that a cement cartel exists. Academics should know that deregulation and trade liberalization do not work when a cartel controls 90 percent of all production. There is no free market, no competition.

When Secretary Roxas says that he is negotiating to peg the price at P125 per bag, that is price fixing, which is what a cartel does. If he does not watch out, Secretary Roxas will be tagged the foreign-owned cement cartel's price fixer.

With his tremendous energies, Secretary Roxas is looking for a win-win solution. There is none. The cartel always wins. The consumer always loses. There is no middle way.

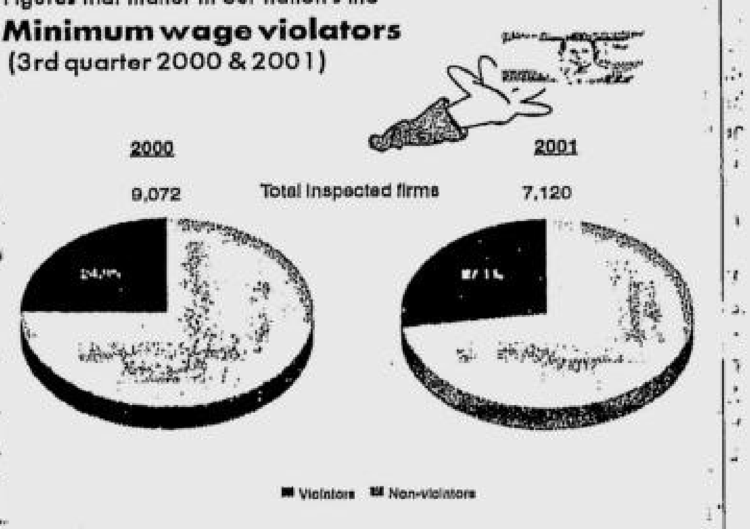
I agree with Secretary Roxas that the government should intervene. But the government should intervene, not to protect the cartel, but to dismantle it. Secretary Roxas can begin by backing the tariff commission all the way.

Now, the Confederation of Homeowners Associations for Reforms in Government and Environment, the Consumers Union of the Philippines and the Philippine Consumer Watch Foundation want to bring the foreign-owned cement cartel to court. Go get 'em, guys!

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Minimum wage violators
(3rd quarter 2000 & 2001)



Source: Bureau of Labor & Employment Statistics

OF the 7,120 establishments inspected by the Labor Department during the third quarter last year, 27.1 percent or 1,930 firms were found violating the Minimum Wage Law. In the same period in 2000, 24.8 percent or over 2,200 of 9,172 inspected firms were violating the law.

Marlcar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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- *1b. Shareholder Value Analysis and Creation:* Cash Flow Framework; Value Added Approaches.
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(May 21–23, 2002, 8:30 am – 12Noon, 1:30 – 5:00PM). Fee: P15,000.00

IV. THE USE OF DERIVATIVES
(June 19-20, 2002, 8:30AM-12 Noon, 1:30 – 5:00PM). Fee: 10,000.00

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JBIC to extend additional funds for Tiwi-Makban rehab

NATIONAL Power Corp. said the Japan Bank for International Cooperation would extend additional funding for the partial rehabilitation of the aging Tiwi-Makban geothermal power plants.

Napocor vice president Reynaldo Santiago said that JBIC had proposed the widening of the scope of the rehabilitation and that the lending agency was willing to give more funds.

Santiago did not disclose the amount of the additional funding but another Napocor official earlier said the lender had earmarked 7.56 billion yen for the project.

"We are now studying certain aspects of the rehabilitation that we did not consider doing earlier," Santiago said.

The long overdue rehabilitation of the Tiwi geothermal complex finally pushed through late last year when the National Economic and Development Authority approved the project.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo earlier said that Napocor had opted for a partial rehabilitation, instead of a full rehabilitation, due to funding constraints.

Napocor had tapped Marubeni Philippines Corp. for the project to bring the 330-megawatt Tiwi plant's performance "back to almost 100 percent."

Philippine Geothermal Inc., which manages the Tiwi steam field, said it expected a more efficient use of geothermal steam after the rehabilitation.

A PGI official said that with the rehabilitation, the plant's generating capacity could increase by up to 20 percent with the same amount of stem used before the rehabilitation.

He said that for two years now, only two of the six-unit Tiwi geothermal complex were operating. *Ronnel W. Domingo*

M. Water posts 38% income hike

MANILA Water Co. Inc. has reported raking in some P160 million to P170 million in profits last year, up 38 percent from the previous year.

This is the second consecutive year that Manila Water, a subsidiary of the Ayala group of companies, has reported positive earnings despite the peso's steep depreciation against the dollar.

The company, one of two providing water distribution services in Metro Manila, reported an income of P123 million in 2000.

Manila Water president Antonino Aquino said the company's earnings were on the back of fiscal prudence and new customers.

The company's capital spending significantly brought down its losses from pilferage and wastage from 63 percent in 1997 to 47 percent as of June this year, Aquino said.

"The reduction in our NRWs (non-revenue water) translated to a steady cash flow base for Manila Water," he said.

Manila Water's outstanding capital stood at around P2.5 billion as of December 2000.

Aquino added that the financial relief given by the government in the form of tariff adjustments in late November enhanced Manila Water's viability and credit standing with its creditors.

Manila Water has secured a $65-million loan from a group of banks to finance its expansion and network rehabilitation program this year.

The company is earmarking some P3 billion to lay down new pipes and other facilities in densely populated urban areas.

The $65-million loan is part of $125 million worth of financing that Manila Water is seeking to secure over the next seven years, according to Manila Water chair and Ayala Corp. vice chair Fernando Zobel de Ayala. *Christine A. Gaylican*

SGV: Statements go (un)verified

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

DAVE Balangue, the vice chair of SGV and Co., wrote a rebuttal to the April 1 Cocktales column which the INQUIRER will be printing in full in the letters-to-the-editor section, if it had not done yet over the weekend.

In so doing, the paper allows the other party to give full vent to his aggravations and even take swings at us. But this time we will not let the claim go unchallenged that Cocktales "does not even bother to check his facts...."

Balangue: SGV is 100-percent wholly owned by its Filipino partners and was never taken over by a majority American partner.

Cocktales: Two ex-SGV partners we have spoken to claim otherwise. Another leading accountant, admittedly a rival, even claims Andersen's stake to be 61 percent. SGV's longtime chair, Washington Sycip, is himself an American citizen, so how can a partnership be 100-percent Filipino?

Arthur Andersen has no equity in SGV?

"In 1985, faced with growing competition for new business in the Far East, Arthur Andersen finally acquiesced to a major merger, adding Asia's largest accounting firm at the time, SGV Group, to their ranks," says the book, "Everybody's Business: A Field Guide to the 400 Leading Companies in America."

Balangue: The SEC examined our working papers on our audit of the financial statements of Victorias Milling Co. and no sanctions were imposed on us.

Cocktales: The accountant is sounding more like a lawyer economizing on the truth. What he failed to say is that an SGV partner was fined and suspended by Picpa precisely because of the Victorias scandal.

Balangue: As provided in auditing standards, there are inherent limitations to an audit, particularly when the misstatements and concealments are perpetrated by management.

Cocktales: This by far is the most dangerous statement made by the country's leading auditing firm.

In plain, what SGV says is, the auditing seal of good housekeeping only covers the financial statements disclosed to them by the management. So why do we have to hire auditors and go through the whole charade? Why not just let publicly listed companies pass off their unaudited financial reports as such, save on audit costs, and let the buyer beware?

The last SGV statement is a sad commentary on how far an Arthur Andersen member firm has gone astray from the vision of its namesake founder, who built the partnership's fortunes during the Great Depression years by precisely taking the industry's whistleblower route.

"Had there been stronger accounting, there wouldn't have been a depression," was one of Arthur Andersen's memorable quotes.

Had there been stronger accounting, there wouldn't have been a Marcosian kleptocracy, either.

Pen + Conway's

THE EDSA Shangri-la, which has been laboring under the shadow of its more famous sister along Ayala Avenue, seems to have struck a marketing lode Friday night with RJ and the New Riots.

Think of Conway's on Thursday nights plus Pen lobby's capacious' chicness and you get the picture.

The hotel management was so overwhelmed by the response from the middle-aged baby boomers, a number of whom had their *bagets* children in tow, that they had to double the normal fenced-off seating area all the way to the marbled lobby hallway.

The absence of a proper dancing floor—the lobby being carpeted—did not deter the salt-and-pepper Marivic Tillman-Javellana from taking off her jacket and swinging it a la '60s go-go dancer, rousing an initially timorous crowd to abandon their timidity. The next time she shows up, the hotel should reward her with free drinks!

The group of Cora Relova, Nini Valdez, Carmen Africa, Lulay Mapa, Minia Dionisio, Cely Lopez, Lucel Villanueva, Paz Sotto, and Budging Shaw danced with so much vivacity that you would think they were back in their high school prom, never mind how many decades ago.

Even Vision Express' Lito Domantay, who normally prefers a younger set, was so worked up by the camaraderie and bonhomie that he joined Ramon Jacinto on stage and belted out a couple of Everly Brothers' songs.

The hotel's Chinese and Japanese guests could only gape, marveling at the locals' wild abandon.

Will the energy last? We will see this Friday.

Yen for Yun Yan

WOULD you walk a mile for a Yun Yan?

Apparently some intrepid mainland Chinese think Filipinos

COCKTALES/ B4

BOI to scrap tax perks for CKD imports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE BOARD of Investments is planning to discontinue by next year the preferred duties granted to completely knocked down (CKD) packs used by assemblers in line with its commitment to the United States to abolish local content and export requirements on vehicles manufactured in the country.

A BOI official said the country's removal of trade-related investment measures (Trims) in the vehicle market by next year would lead to a reduction in purchases of locally made automotive parts while encouraging industry players to sell more completely built up (CBU) units.

This would render obsolete the incentive package for CKD assemblers that are levied 7 to 10 percent in duties compared with the 25 to 30 percent charged to CBUs or units assembled abroad.

The official said that instead of levying tariffs in CKD packs, each vehicle component would be slapped a separate duty which would give players more flexibility in buying their components from cheaper sources abroad.

While this is seen as a negative for the domestic automotive parts manufacturing industry, the BOI official said this could lower sticker prices of cars and commercial vehicles, considering that the government has lowered the duties on imported goods not produced in the Philippines from 3 percent to one percent. The official said that at best, only 200 parts of a vehicle's estimated 2,000 components are produced locally.

The CKD incentive package is at the core of the BOI's 30-year-old automotive industry development strategy (currently dubbed Motor Vehicle Development Program). The program attracted Japanese carmakers (and recently Americans) to establish factories here by making it cheaper to assemble their units in the Philippines rather than importing their units as CBUs.

Aside from the CKD package, the BOI also required the assemblers to ensure that at least 30 to 40 percent of the parts used in their cars and commercial vehicles are purchased from local sources under the local content requirement. They should also generate a set amount of export earnings to offset their import costs under the net foreign exchange earnings requirement.

But with the start of the Asean Free Trade Area (which would lower duties on goods traded in the regions to no more than 5 percent) and forced removal of Trims next year, the BOI has been forced to rethink its strategy in developing a local automotive industry.

Local . . .

From page B1

P500 million.

But the market is starting to see IPOs becoming bigger and bigger this year.

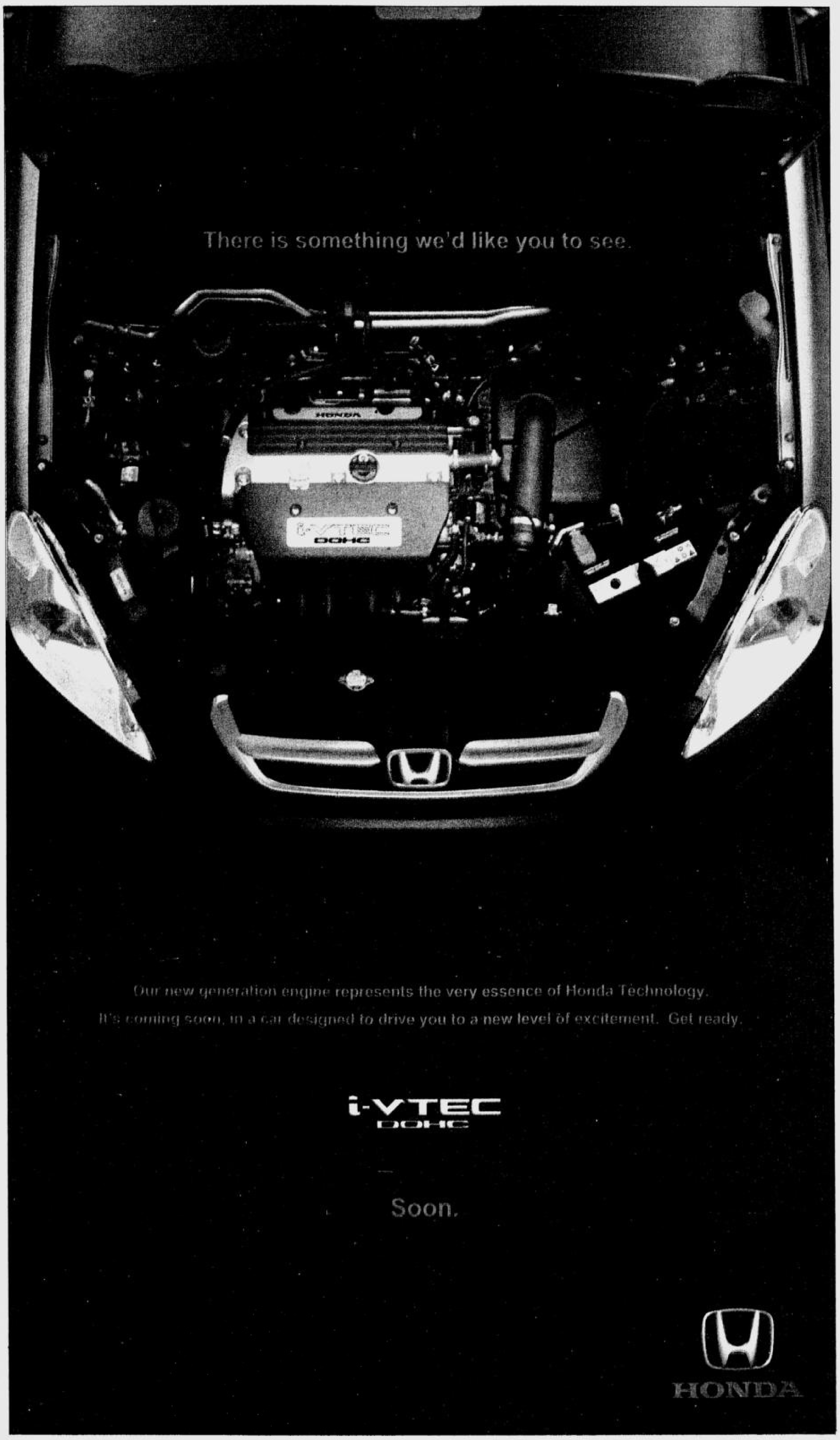
There are so far two companies which have listed on the PSE this year—Citystate Savings Bank and Cebu-based Salcon Power Corp.

Salcon Power was the most actively traded stock on its inaugural trading on April 2 when it sold to the public P565 million worth of primary and secondary shares. PSE officials are hoping that Salcon Power's successful listing would encourage energy-related firms such as Mirant, Pilipinas Shell and Caltex Philippines to likewise finally go public.

Starting its IPO today is Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc., a spin-off unit of leisure estate firm Belle Corp. where retail tycoon Henry Sy acquired a majority stake. Belle's offering of close to P1 billion in combined primary and secondary shares will be the biggest IPO size since 1998.

An even bigger offering is expected in May, when Henry Sy's banking arm, Banco de Oro Universal Bank, sells a 10-percent stake to the public to raise P1.58 billion to P2.1 billion in gross proceeds.

Even as the bank has yet to begin its offering or get approval from regulators, Eduardo Francisco, senior vice president at underwriter BDO Capital & Investment Corp., said there has been a big demand for bank shares, specially from employees of the SM group.


There is something we'd like you to see.
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DOHC
Our new generation engine represents the very essence of Honda Technology.
It's coming soon, in a car designed to drive you to a new level of excitement. Get ready.
i-VTEC
DOHC
Soon.
HONDA

FAQs about technical analysis

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

OVER the long holiday, I watched a biblical movie based on my 10 commandments. In the movie, Nathan was a horrible fellow, quite unlike me. And Moses must have been terribly sick because God told him to take two tablets. He brought them down from Mt. Sinai whereas I brought mine down from Mt. Pinatubo in the form of capsules, much lighter. I liked the scene where the Queen smothers herself in exotic perfumes called pheromones. Then she makes love to the Pharaoh and the Pharaoh moans.

Next week, I will disclose a totally new method of trading, based on the techniques used by the Fund Managers in Market Wizards, together with the disciplines of the 10 commandments. It is low risk, high reward, and combines fun with discipline. It is guaranteed to fascinate all readers and could be the most important article that I have ever written.

But this week, I will deal with more mundane matters. Since I started writing in the INQUIRER six weeks ago, I have received 600 emails and I have answered all but two, often in great detail. As the stock market has now come to life, I want to concentrate on trading for my clients and subscribers, so I will have less time to answer questions. Most of them are repetitive and are from readers who want to know which books to read, which websites to visit, whether there are any courses on technical analysis, what to do with stocks bought at a much higher price, and details of my newsletter. I will answer them all in detail.

For beginners, who wish to learn about technical analysis, I recommend Technical Analysis of Futures Markets by John Murphy. This book is simply written, covers every topic in depth and is a veritable encyclopedia. Highly recommended. It should be available in local bookstores but you may have to order it. If you have an international credit card, you can obtain it from Amazon Online.com or Barnes and Noble.com. Compare the prices.

For Oriental analysis, there is no finer book than Beyond Candlesticks by Steve Nison. This should be more readily available and it deals not only with candlesticks, but also with KAGI, which is a simplified variation of Point & Figure charts, used by the Japanese in 1600, for trading in rice. The founder, who made a fortune, was made an honorary samurai! Candlesticks add an extra dimension to analysis but give too many reversals unless modified by a stochastic or an oscillator. These are known as filtered candlesticks.

For more advanced students, buy Momentum by Martin Pring. This is the series of indicators most favored by US technical analysts and also by myself. It can often warn you of impending tops or bottoms, a few days before it becomes evident in the price action. I use all of the above, but the parameters indicated for the huge American market do not work well in our tiny stock market. They have to be modified, but do not ask me how, because that is a trade secret which took me years to figure out.

Turning to websites, I recommend four. The first is Philstocks.net, which has been around for some time. It gives lots of economic data, which is not surprising since Joe Vistan is a well-known economist. It also gives fundamental data, charts, dates of dividends, price earnings ratios, book values, earnings projections and recommendations. Very comprehensive, and there is even a message board.

A fun website is yehey.com, which is the local version of yahoo. It has information on a wide variety of subjects, not just the stock market, and is beautifully designed. It gives data on financials, economic indicators and write-ups on selected stocks. You will like this website.

Then there is technistock.com, which is more formal, but contains a wealth of information on all local companies. Just register, click on any company, and you can find almost anything, but there are no recommendations.

If you want to learn about Point and Figure charts, go to dorseywright.com. It explains how to construct them, analyze them and there is even an examination to see if you have absorbed it all. I passed. Regrettably there are no courses that I know of. If I were 20 years younger, I would run seminars for free but I no longer have the time or energy.

There are several brokers who employ technical analysts and a few send out recommendations to their clients but due to the low net turnover value, their numbers have been dwindling rapidly. This also applies to fundamental analysts in research departments, many of whom are now jobless.

I produce a daily newsletter, which covers all the leading stocks and over the past two years has been extremely accurate. It is available only by subscription but the cost is minimal and you can cover a year's payment in a single trade. It is primarily based on technical analysis but it includes economic data, fundamentals, various types of charts, and covers the US market, Asia, the Phisix, oil, gold and even currencies.

The most popular feature is that it gives weekly the support and resistance levels of more than 50 active stocks, so you can anticipate breakouts in advance. It also gives the dates of company meetings so that you can position yourself ahead of them. The latest feature is an in-depth analysis of which stocks foreign brokers are buying and selling every day, and the net amount of each stock. This is important information not readily available elsewhere. This allows you to follow what the big boys are doing.

My main objective is to promote technical analysis, not steal other brokers clients, so you can be a subscriber and deal with anyone you choose. Alternatively, you can be a client without being a subscriber.

Lastly, I get lots of emails asking what to do with stocks, which have fallen 60 percent. There is not much you can do except shoot your broker, because, in order to recover your loss, your stocks have to appreciate, not 60 percent, but 250 percent, which is practically impossible unless you believe in reincarnation.

You could have yourself frozen at death and hope to be revived in 100 years, by which time your stocks may have recovered. Incidentally, before people are frozen in liquid nitrogen, it is customary to sing, "Freeze a jolly good fellow, freeze a jolly good fellow, freeze a jolly good fellow and so say all of us."

(If you like my terrible puns, call mrbearbull@hotmail.com. If you wish to complain, call 410-82973 and ask for Osama bin Laden.)

Highlands Prime eyes development of Hacienda Looc

By Doris C. Dumlao

HIGHLANDS Prime Leisure Properties Inc., a spin-off property unit of Belle Corp., is bidding to co-develop into a seaside residential resort the 5,000-ha Hacienda Looc in Batangas owned by the family of retail tycoon Henry Sy.

Highlands Prime vice chair Willy Ocier said on Friday the company would not only continue the development of the plush Tagaytay Highlands leisure estate but also pursue other high-end property projects outside of the assets inherited from Belle.

"It is part of our plan to negotiate to be able to develop Hacienda Looc into a residential resort enclave," Ocier told reporters during a signing ceremony with the Philippine Stock Exchange on Highland Prime's initial public offering.

He said the Looc property, situated near Landco Pacific Corp.'s Punta Fuego, was only a raw land at present but was ideal for a seaside resort development.

Highlands Prime, which will begin its IPO Tuesday and list its shares on the PSE on April 23, is also launching four new property projects within the Tagaytay area worth a combined P4.57 billion within the next three years.

The company—which will be 53-percent owned by Henry Sy, 27 percent by Belle and 20 percent by the public after the IPO—inherited from Belle P7.72 billion worth of property assets consisting of 534 ha of undeveloped land, 71 developed subdivisions and 25 finished residential units.

Cocktales . . .

From page B3

would.

Made by the third largest cigarette manufacturer in the world but a virtual unknown in the Western world, Yun Yan is currently being soft marketed initially in Metro Manila among the Chinoy community who longs for a taste of the old country, according to Yun Yan importer, ex-shipping executive Roberto Lim.

Yun Yan, which apparently does not mean anything in Chinese, is being retailed at P45 per pack for the stronger "red" variety, or about twice the price of the local Marlboro and Philip Morris.

The "white" version, on the other hand, retails for P35 per pack.

Heard through the grapevine

BUSINESSMAN Herman Montenegro, also known as the presidential *balae*, plans to IPO his export-winner Pacific Activated Carbon Co. by the last quarter, traditionally the market's bullish phase of the year.

Outside the industry, very few people know that the Montenegro firm is the largest coconut shell-based activated carbon maker in the world, exporting 95 percent of its production to such blue-chip multinationals as Philip Morris and 3M.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

UPS OPENS HUB IN CLARK VAL HANDUMON

President Macapagal leads the ceremonial toast with UPS International president Ron Wallace (left) and Asia-Pacific chief Charles Adams marking the formal opening of United Parcel Services' (UPS) regional hub at the Clark special economic zone in Pampanga.

ePLDT to invest ₱312M in call-center facility

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

EPLDT Inc., the information technology services arm of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., is investing P312 million to put up a call-center facility in line with its venture with Echostar Communications Corp.

Echostar sees the project as a crucial building block in establishing the Philippines as the e-services hub of Asia based on the importance placed on the project.

The Colorado-based Echostar is one of the leading providers of multi-channel video digital programming and data services in North America. It provides Direct Broadcast Satellite television products and services through its Dish Network, which has more than 6 million customers.

ePLDT Inc., through wholly owned Parlance Systems Inc., will put up the call center at PLDT's Jupiter warehouse in Makati City. The 500-seat call center will work in three shifts and generate 1,519 new jobs.

The Board of Investments granted the project pioneer incentives. All IT-related projects worth at least P100 million are granted pioneer status, which makes them eligible for longer income tax holidays of at least six years.

The Echostar project is one of two alliances forged by ePLDT during the state visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the United States last year.

The other project of ePLDT is with Teletech Holdings Inc., which wants to have an 800-seater call center in the Philippines. Teletech is a leading provider of integrated customer relationship management (CRM) services and solutions for global organizations mainly in communication, financial services, and government and transportation industries. The company has operations in the United States, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore and Spain. ePLDT will establish an 800-seat call center to support Teletech's overseas operations.

Follow-through buying seen

From page B1

The Phisix gained 25.73 points higher or 1.83 percent week-on-week to close at 1,432.86 on Friday.

"What's keeping the correction from happening is that the market is still very liquid. Interest rates are still very low and so investors are investing in stocks. But they really need a discount to be encouraged to buy some more," Sta. Ana said.

"We are looking at 1,700 as a year-end target, but we need momentum to reach that," he said.

As such, Sta. Ana said the market would likely be sensitive to sell-offs upon the release of the first-quarter corporate earnings reports, noting that profitability during the period was still expected to be weak.

Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, April 5, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67	67.5	66.5	67.5	607,500
China Banking Corp.	615	615	615	615	400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	3,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	43	41	41.5	1,237,300
First E-Bank Corp.	2.08	2.1	2.06	2.06	50,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	61.5	61.5	61.5	61.5	22,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	43	43	42	42.5	4,256,100
Philippine National Bank	65	65	61.5	63	46,700
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	1,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.70	12.75	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	22.5	24	22.5	23.5	201,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.5	280,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	245	245	245	245	50
Manulife Financial Corp.	1310	1310	1310	1310	20
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	320,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1065	1090	1065	1080	14,710
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	9,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	1,360,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	805	805	805	805	10,560
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0625	0.0625	0.06	0.06	6,300,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	70,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	60,000
Pilal	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	4,790,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	555	560	555	560	87,720
Ivantage Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	360,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.021	60,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	31	32.5	31	32	232,300
Manila Electric Co. B	47	49	47	48.5	911,700
Petron Corp.	1.74	1.76	1.72	1.74	6,784,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.84	716,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.55	2.6	2.5	2.6	2,168,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.39	380,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.73	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5	5	5	5	2,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	150,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	40,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.1	2.1	60,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13	13	12.75	13	265,800
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23	23.25	22.75	22.75	222,100
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	100,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.7	1.92	1.7	1.9	120,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48.5	48	48	142,700
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	63.5	62	62	402,600
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	11.5	11.5	11	11	6,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	100,000
Atok-Big Wedge.Inc. B	10	10	10	10	1,000
Ayala Corp. Ac 0	6.6	6.4	6.4	64,	101,000 4
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2	2.02	2	2.02	167,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	70,000
APC Group Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	100,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	30,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.79	0.81	0.78	0.78	5,730,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	400,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,110,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.0975	0.1	0.09	0.09	7,700,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	244,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	284,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	1,100,000
Ionics Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	41,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.84	1.86	442,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.87	2,090,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.55	0.58	960,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	8,360,000
Music Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	800,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	330,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	200,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	30,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
SPI Technologies Inc.	13	13	13	13	69,200
Steniel Manufacturing	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.62	0.64	0.62	0.63	23,350,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.59	0.61	0.59	0.61	120,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	120,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.4	230,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38	38	37	37.5	554,900
DMCI Holdings Inc.- Pref.	770	775	770	775	2,000
Equitable Pci Bank-War	1.68	1.7	1.66	1.68	165,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	795	795	790	790	5,260
Jollibee Warrants	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	4,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	20,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	4,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	35,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7.3	7	7.3	26,585,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	540,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	4,300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	520,000
Filinvest Land Inc. F	2.32	2.42 2	.32 2	0.36	5,429,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	710,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	2,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	5,212,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.0725	0.075	0.0725	0.0725	1,400,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	3,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	2	2	2	2	7,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.05	0.05	0.047	0.048	50,300,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	4,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	1,860,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.235	1,360,000
Omico Corporation	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	35,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	60,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	4,000,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	6,100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000

CURRENCIES

April 5, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.137915	1.000000	51.1050
Japan	Yen	0.008600	0.007558	0.3863
United Kingdom	Pound	1.632226	1.434400	73.3050
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145904	0.128220	6.5527
Switzerland	Franc	0.683227	0.600420	30.6845
Canada	Dollar	0.714233	0.627668	32.0770
Singapore	Dollar	0.617929	0.543036	27.7519
Australia	Dollar	0.603669	0.530504	27.1114
Bahrain	Dinar	3.018504	2.652661	135.5642
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.303437	0.266660	13.6277
Brunei	Dollar	0.616255	0.541565	27.6767
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000118	0.000104	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.026111	0.022946	1.1727
UAE	Dirham	0.309822	0.272272	13.9145
Korea	Won	0.000861	0.000757	0.0387
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.878800	44.9111
Brazil	Real	0.493887	0.434028	22.1810
Denmark	Kroner	0.134347	0.118064	6.0337
India	Rupee	0.023308	0.020483	1.0468
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.299491	0.263193	13.4505
Mexico	New Peso	0.126127	0.110840	5.6645
New Zealand	Dollar	0.500799	0.440102	22.4914
Norway	Kroner	0.130603	0.114774	5.8655
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019109	0.016793	0.8582
South Africa	Rand	0.101600	0.089286	4.5630
Sweden	Kroner	0.110660	0.097248	4.9699
Syria	Pound	0.022095	0.019417	0.9923
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.036050	0.028653	1.4643
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001286	0.001130	0.0577

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

AMA, on 54% batting average, honors 42 ECE board passers

AMA Computer University, Asia's first and largest IT university, recently honored 42 electronics and communications engineering (ECE) graduates who passed the stringent board examination via a recognition night at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

The awardees received special gold medals from top campus officials led by AMA Computer University president Dr. Amable R. Aguiluz V.

Aguiluz also presented a plaque of recognition and P30,000 cash incentive to board third placer Clinton Cesar P. Tiu. With a rating of 89.15 percent, Tiu was the first-ever AMA graduate to land in the board's top five. According to the Professional Regulation Commission, only 2,132 out of 4,368 passed the ECE board exam last November.

"The whole AMA community is very proud of our ECE board passers. They are the evident fruits of our hard labor and collaborative efforts to produce world-class professionals. I am positive that there will be more board topnotchers in the examinations to come. The University vows to reward these deserving graduates (who will top the next ECE board exams) of greater cash incentives and recognition as they continue to give honor to our university," said Aguiluz.

A total of 70 examinees from AMA took the exams, for a passing average of 54 percent—five percent higher than the national passing average of 49 percent. Sixteen were from the AMA Makati Campus: Ramon C. Aguilar, Jr., Jigie G. Bulatao, Paul Vincent I. Chan, Aaron G. Cruz, Enrico O. Delfino, Alfred Allan E. Escobar, Glen N. Gernan, Raymund N. Hervas, Gion Carlo A. Montesines, Jonathan B. Nery, Ryan G. Pagsuyuin, Aurelio A. Pilipiña Jr., Edsel B. Reyes, Mark Joseph D. Sunglao, Montriel O. Villagracia, and Clinton Cesar P. Tiu.

AMA Computer University in Project 8, Quezon City had 18 board passers. They are Arnold Abulencia, Jerry Wing R. Alcala, Pauline Aimee R. Baba, Cris B. Basbas, Angelo A. Beltran, Jhun V. Cayaban, Jeorge L. de Jesus II, Dominico Angelo H. Delicano, Michael G. Eugenio, Vizmark R. Evangelista, Eva Mee A. Gazmin, Ryan Y. Gonzales, Ricardo L. Lamorena III, Nana, Allan C. Paglinawan, Christian Reyes, Rey C. Rodrigueza, Nharciso Jhoel S. Santos, Raymond A. Sy, and Robert Patricio E. Tan Torres.

AMA Computer College-Caloocan and East Rizal had two board passers each. They are Michieko G. Sumida and Raymond S. Santos from Caloocan and Remus Santamaria and Lemuel Calderon from East Rizal.

Capping the night off was the victory toast in which AMA officials and the board passers raised their glasses in celebration of AMA's achievement. The AMA Recognition Night for Board Passers, which started in 2000, is an annual event organized by the AMA Education System Office of the alumni affairs. AMA is now on its fifth year of producing top-caliber ECE graduates

DISASTER MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Timothy Randall, senior lecturer from the Department of Disaster Management of Cranfield University, recently visited the Philippines under the auspices of the UK/RP Joint MOU of the Global Conflict Prevention Fund. He conducted a series of lectures in Disaster Management for two one-week courses at the National Defense College of the Philippines. This was the first in-country training to be undertaken in the Philippines. Cranfield University is acknowledged as one of the world leaders in disaster management training. Shown at the front row, third from left, are Col. Martin Stretch, Defence Attache, British Embassy Manila; Commodore F. Tolin (Rt.), VP-Emergency Management Institute of the Philippines; David Campbell, Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy Manila; Department of National Defense Undersecretary for Operations Antonio C. Santos, Jr.; Commodore Carlos L. Agustin (Rt), president of the NDCP; Randall; Chief Petty Officer Dennis Finch Assistant to the Defence Attache, with the training's participants during the opening ceremonies.

'GROUND ZERO' AT THE MET

A photo exhibit called 'After September 11: Images from Ground Zero' was opened recently at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Franklin M. Ebdalin and US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Robert W. Fitts cut the ribbon. Also shown are (from left) US Cultural Affairs officer Thomas J. Kral, US Public Affairs Officer Michael H. Anderson, and Museum director Victorino M. Manalo. Organized in cooperation with the Museum of the City of New York and the US Embassy, the exhibition features 27 photos of the World Trade Center horror and heroism. The photos were taken by New York landscape photographer Joel Meyerowitz.

MFI-AHRI AGREEMENT FORGED

Max's Franchising Inc has recently signed a franchising contract with Ang Hoc Resources Inc., owner of soon-to-open Max's Restaurant in Cagayan de Oro. Sealing the agreement with a handshake are Ahri corporate secretary Julie Lara and MFI president Jim Fuentebella. With them are Robert Ocampo, MFI chief operating officer (left), and Jeffrey Ang, Ahri managing director. Located at Tiano Bros. corner Chavez Street, Divisoria, Cagayan de Oro, Max's Restaurant Cagayan de Oro is expected to be operational in May. For information on franchising, call Max's Franchising Inc. at 832-1991 local 145 and look for Gretchen Sibayan, or visit www.maxschicken.com.

INQUIRER VISITS LIN CAFE

Lin Café of Linmarr Suites and Apartelle recently hosted a lunch for the Inquirer group led by Lifestyle/Elan editor Marge Enriquez, photographer Chito Vecina, fashion stylist Antonio Santos, PR man Ayo Gunting, and Carrie model Chriscel Agudo. Linmarr is owned by the Bangayan couple Ronald and Gene, who is also behind the SRO shows of Pops Fernandez, Gary Valenciano, Side A, and South Border.

Nominations for Tower Awards underway

TO RECOGNIZE the dignity of labor, the annual search for the blue and white-collar workers of the Philippines is now ongoing and nominations are now being accepted in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment and its attached agencies, Tesda, and the Civil Service Commission. This was announced by lawyer Edgardo E. Tumangan, president of the Rotary Club of Manila, saying that this will not only serve as an incentive to workers who have done excellent and innovative work, but likewise give pride and prestige for the company.

Delfin T. Hallare Jr., overall chair of the project this year, said that a nominee must be a Filipino skilled non-supervisory blue or white-collar worker or employee whose job directly involves the main activity of the company. The nominee must also have a consistent record of high level of performance, be of good moral character, has introduced extraordinary or innovative ideas, systems or designs which have brought beneficial results to that company. Awards will be given on the following categories: agriculture, fishing and forestry, farming, mining and quarrying, construction, petroleum, coal and chemical, power generation;

Manufacturing, distribution and maintenance of automobiles, electronics and electrical products, machinery and power equipment, food, beverage and tobacco, leather, rubber and plastics, textile and garments, metal processing, packaging products and government, community and social services.

Other organized labor sectors have endorsed participation, led by Ronald Gaspar, national president of the Philippine Association of Labor Management Councils. He said that the thrust of Tower Awards is very much aligned to the goals of Palmco, which is to recognize the contributions made by workers and employees in the Philippine workforce. This, in turn, would lead to higher productivity, enhancement of the creative talents of the workers, and would result to a more harmonious relationship between labor and management.

Sponsored by the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, Metrobank Foundation, International Labor Organization, Stradcom, Oracle Phils., Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Technological University of the Philippines, Sybase Philippines, Vacation Hotel, Global Brands and Tesoro International.

Targeted to culminate on May 2 at a grand ceremony at the Manila Hotel, winners will receive cash, a Tower trophy, a full scholarship for a Bachelor's or a Masteral Degree (transferable to awardee's children), free travel, board and lodging, and other surprise packages.

Interested parties may send their nominations to the Tower Awards 2002 Committee, Rotary Club of Manila, second floor of the Delgado Building, Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. For inquiries, call the RCM secretariat at 527-1887, 527-1889, 527-5295 and 754-4100.

Support the award program. It's time to look into your reservoir of human resources. You could find a gem of a worker in your midst, someone you could nominate for the Tower Awards

Product FILES

Kookie Korner's new chocolate cake

KOOKIE KORNER, home of the best Classic Chocolate Cake, has a new, equally superb yet affordable Chocolate Cake. This lusciously tempting cake is drenched in rich and velvety smooth chocolate icing that will leave a lingering sensation to your senses. Create the ultimate moment and indulge now at the Kookie Korner kiosks at Glorietta, Shangri-La Edsa Mall, SM Megamall A and Unimart Supermarket. For orders and deliveries, call 561-3231, 561-9967 and 721-3415.

TRAVEL DELEGATES WELCOMED IN VISAYAS

The recently concluded three-day Visayas Travel and Tour Fair held at the Trade Hall of SM Cebu, participated in by travel industries nationwide, was a success. Shown is regional tourism director Dawn Roa (third from right) welcoming (from left) Nitas president Robert Lim Joseph, Travel Girl Davao 2001 Ann Angeles, Travel Girl Mindanao 2001 April Cayabyab, Travel Girl Philippines 2001 Grace Coloso, and Club Noah Isabelle's Ito Tuazon to the exposition.

Positivism summer art workshop

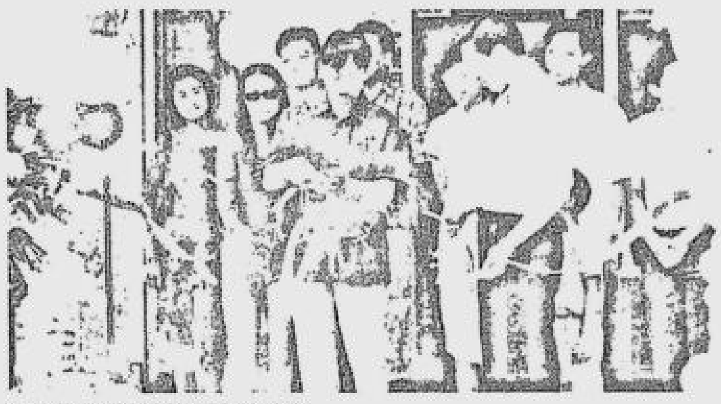
THE POSITIVISM summer art workshop conducted by positivism exponent and painter ER Tagle and his artist-friends happening once a week for eight weeks, is now underway. Participants are now learning the basics of drawings and paintings.

The participants are introduced to the use of pencil, charcoal, watercolor, oil pastel and mixed media with focus on positive subjects such as hard work or "sipag", family unity, old churches, mother and child, various scenic Philippine spots, fauna and flora, the two fishermen or "bayanihan", and love and care for God and environment.

The schedules for residents of Makati City are every Saturday (which started April 6). from 9 a.m. to 12 noon held at the Roozen Hall of St. John Bosco Parish, Arnaiz Street and at the ER Tagle gallery at 1144 Chino Roces Avenue from 2 to 5 p.m.

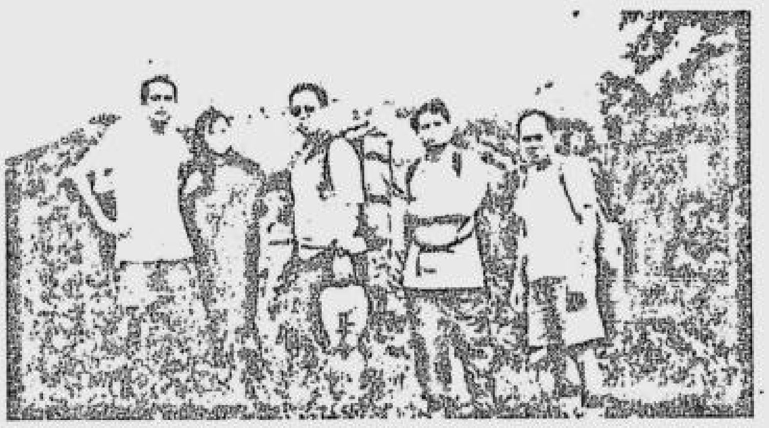
Every Thursday from 2 to 5 p.m. lessons are held at the Formation Center, Christ the King Parish, Greenmeadows, Quezon City (classes here started April 4. Starting April 5, and every Friday from 2 to 5 p.m. lessons were also being held at the Kanlungan ng Sining, Rizal Park (at the back of National Library), TM Kalaw, Ermita, Manila.

After the eight lessons the best works of the students will be exhibited and be up for sale to recover the tuition and the expenses for the art materials needed for the whole program. For inquiries, call Ana or Mario at 816-0904 and 899-1523 or 0917-9726223.



SAIGON BEST IN RP

The first Philippine franchise outlet of Saigon Best, which offers one of the world's best sandwiches, was opened recently at 34E Matalino Street, Diliman, Quezon City. Saigon Best introduces Banh-Mi (Vietnamese sandwich), a crispy, light and delicious sandwich that is a culinary marriage of French techniques, Chinese ingredients and Vietnamese ingenuity. Shown cutting the ceremonial ribbon are Alex Hua, VP for franchise and Terry Hua, general manager, together with their wives Gina P. Hua and Janine Z. Hua. Saigon Best will also open soon in Eastwood Center, Glorietta and Rockwell Center in Makati, and Robinsons Place in Manila. For inquiries, call 433-6160.



OCULAR AT MT. TALAMITAM

Benny Hermanos of the PAL Mountaineers (center) who handles the mountaineering segment of Snack 2002 outdoor camp for kids is shown with his counselors (from left, Jacques Borlaza, Nelia Pallorina, Lyndon Orias, and Romy Valdes) on an ocular of Mt. Talamitam, Nasugbu, Batangas, the site of the trek. The trek happens April 8 to 13. Supported by nature grants from Purefoods, Coleman, Konica, Conquer, Standard Insurance, Ascof Syrup for Kids, LA Gear, Joey @ 92.3, 105.1 Crossover, 88.8 Citylite, and the Junior Inquirer, Snack 2002 offers outdoor sports and art activities for kids aged 7 to 13. For inquiries, call 721-0801, 726-7164.

BITS Clips

Marawi City marathon for peace

THE ISLAMIC City of Marawi invites race enthusiasts from all over the country to join a run for a cause on April 14. The marathon will bring together Muslims and Christian sports buffs who will run from Marawi City to neighboring Iligan City, Lanao del Norte. City mayor Solitario Ali encourages visitors to travel to Muslim areas in the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao. Marawi City, where the beautiful and mysterious Lake Lanao is found, is dubbed the Baguio City of the Muslim South because of its cool weather. For inquiries, call Marawi City vice mayor Yusoph "Popoy" Pangadapun, Jr at 0917-4860451.

Social standards seminar at PTTC

ETHICAL business practices, including social responsibility, are becoming increasingly important issues among buyers of goods and services from developed countries. In response to this challenge, the Carl Duisberg Gessellschaft e.V. (CDG) of Germany and the Philippine Trade Training Center, in cooperation with ECC International, will be conducting a "Social Standards and the Perspectives on European Markets" seminar for the garments and furniture industries on April 10 and 11 at Seminar Room C, second floor of the PTTC Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, corner Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. A fee of P500 will be charged per participant. For inquiries, call Ronnie Limbago of PTTC at 833-7337, 834-1344 to 49.

Circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses

JEHOVAH'S Witnesses will hold their circuit assembly on April 13 and 14 at 1140 Barangay Kaligayahan, Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Quezon City. The expected attendance is 2,500 members from Bulacan Circuit No. 1 composed of 18 congregations. There will be a public discourse based on the Bible that will be delivered by guest speaker Bro. Justiniano Moral. The theme of this circuit assembly is "Fear God and Give Him Glory". All are invited to attend this free event.

Local brokers get bigger share of trade volume

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL brokerage houses are getting a bigger share of the trading volume at the Philippine Stock Exchange following the shakeout among their foreign counterparts last year.

Based on a list released by the PSE on the Top 20 brokers for the month of March, 12 local brokers made it to the list.

UCPB Securities Inc., the brokerage arm of United Coconut Planters Bank, grabbed the No. 1 slot, accounting for 18.98 percent of the total value turnover of P23.8 billion in March.

Foreign brokers Deutsche Regis Partners Inc., UBS Warburg Securities (Phils.) Inc., JP Morgan Securities Phils. Inc., ING Baring Securities (Phils.) Inc. and CLSA Philippines Inc. occupied the 2nd to 6th slots, respectively, obtaining market shares ranging from 8.65 percent to 5.27 percent.

Philippine Equity Partners Inc., formerly Merrill Lynch Securities (Phils.) Inc. which became a local firm after a management buyout, ranked 7th followed by another foreign broker, ABN Amro Asia Securities (Phils.) Inc.

Ranking 9th to 11th were local brokers ATR-Kim Eng Securities Inc., BPI Securities Corp. and Abacus Securities Corp., while foreign broker DBS Vickers Securities (Phils.) Inc. ranked 12th.

The last of the eight foreign brokers that landed on the magic 20 list was KGI Securities (Phils.) Inc., which ranked 14th.

The other local brokers on the Top 20 list were: Mandarin Securities Corp. (13th); AB Capital Securities (15th); SB Equities Inc. (16th); Asiasec Equities Inc. (17th); Goldstar Equities Inc. (18th); Angping & Associates Securities Inc. (19th); and Tansengco & Co. Inc. (20th).

Twelve brokers likewise made it to the Top 20 brokers for the cumulative data covering January to March, including: UCPB Securities (5th); Philippine Equity Partners (7th); ATR Kim-Eng (8th); and RCBC Securities Inc. (9th).

Co-ops to roll back rates

THE COUNTRY'S 119 electric cooperatives will slash by 10 centavos per kilowatt-hour their basic charges starting next month.

Luis Manuel Corral, secretary general of the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, said the rollback was on top of the reduction that would arise from the cooperatives' proposed unbundled rates.

On the sidelines of the Energy Regulatory Commission's hearing last Friday of Manila Electric Co.'s petition for unbundling, Corral lambasted the utility firm for seeking a rate increase when the cooperatives were lowering theirs.

"If we can lower our rates, why can't a giant company like Meralco do the same?" he asked.

"One of the benefits from the Electric Power Industry Reform Act is that the cooperatives will be able to lower their rates by 30 to 40 centavos per kwh," he said. "The ERC has not ordered us to do so, but we will implement reduction of the first 10 centavos in advance."

The reduction was brought about by the government's move assuming a total of about P17 billion in cooperative debts to the National Electrification Administration, he said.

These debts were incurred in raising funds for the rural electrification program.

The law says the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. will assume the debts.

"We can implement a second round of the rate reduction involving another 20-30 centavos per kwh once that program is ready," Corral said.

He said Meralco should not be asking for rate increases to raise funds for its investments.

Meralco earlier warned that its services would "deteriorate" without the additional capital that it could raise through an increase in power charges.

"Meralco should not put this burden on the customers," he said. "Private risks must remain private."

Ivanna dela Peña, head of Meralco's utility economics, downplayed the cooperatives' rate rollback, saying it was possible only because the government would assume their debts.

"We can probably do that too if our loans will also be condoned," Dela Peña said. "But only the cooperatives are given that leeway."

She noted that the government's shouldering the cooperatives' debts still meant burden for consumers in terms of taxes.

The Meralco official also clarified that the firm made no threats of intentional power cuts if it could not get a rate hike.

"What we are saying is that when the viability of a public utility is at stake, the provision of a basic service may be compromised," she said.

She added that if a rate hike was not allowed, Meralco would have to forego taking in new customers.

Dela Peña said Meralco's return on rate base—a measure of profitability—has gone below 8 percent since 1998.

Meralco has a commitment with the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank to maintain an RORB of at least 8 percent. It owes these lenders a total of $200 million.

Ronnel W. Domingo

Gov't saves ₱5.7M from software deal

THE GOVERNMENT has saved over P5.7 million on P22 million worth of software it purchased under a "select licensing agreement" between the Department of Budget and Management and Microsoft Corp.

"We had 26 percent savings (on software purchases) in just two weeks. Assuming the government would spend between P500 million and P1 billion, that would add up to a large amount of savings overall," Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said in an interview on Thursday.

Boncodin placed potential savings from the software deal at between P125 million and P250 million a year.

"The select licensing agreement presented itself as the best way to acquire the best software at the best price. The department is enthusiastic about the savings on resources and, at the same time, the increased productivity it will give," she added.

Microsoft has offered to sell its software, which includes its popular Windows operating system, to all government agencies at huge discounts owing to the volume involved.

Boncodin said the agreement between the budget department and Microsoft would cut red tape and get rid of corruption, as payments would become almost automatic.

Suppliers would no longer have to wait for months for payments, cutting through red tape and doing away with under-the-table transactions, she said.

Only agencies under the national government are currently covered by the software licensing agreement.

Boncodin said the budget department would ask local government units to adopt the system.

"The savings itself will be the attraction. There's no need for that much marketing. We just have to show them that it can be done," she told reporters.

The Procurement Service, a unit of the budget department, is projecting savings of at least 15 percent and as much as 94 percent from the government's new "e-procurement system."

"Government's budget for supplies each year amounts to P18 billion. If around 20 percent of these will be purchased through e-procurement, savings could amount to around P900 million. It pays to buy in bulk because when the government does the buying for all the other agencies, it's like only a single entity is buying," according to Boncodin.

Abigail L. Ho

SEC makes permanent Unicap CDO

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has made permanent the cease-and-desist order against United Capital Management Inc. It also has threatened to revoke the company's corporate license for allegedly engaging in buying and selling securities without the necessary license.

In an order issued last month, the SEC gave Unicap 15 days from receipt of the order to argue why its certificate of registration should not be revoked and why administrative penalties should not be imposed on the company.

An investigation conducted by the SEC's inspection and surveillance division last year showed that Unicap had been engaged in brokering/dealing of securities without a license. This was found beyond the scope of its primary franchise and in violation of Section 28 of the Securities Regulation Code and Section 45 of the Corporation Code.

Unicap's articles of incorporation allow the company to merely "sell consumer food products in retail and wholesale."

Following its investigation, the SEC issued a CDO restraining Unicap from further soliciting or accepting investments from the public and gave the company up to five days to appeal the order.

Records showed that copies of the CDO were served on and received by Unicap through its incorporators and directors Reynaldo Beltran and Barnard Lausingco in July last year. However, the SEC did not receive any request for the lifting of the CDO issued last year even before it made the order permanent.

The SEC said it made the CDO permanent in order "to protect the investing public from fraud and/or grave or irreparable injury that may arise out of or in connection with Unicap's questionable activities, as well as to restore investor confidence in the Philippines as a credible investment destination."

Regulators have received numerous reports of companies engaging in the illegal sale of securities.

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Asean finance ministers upbeat on recovery, see growth at 4%

YANGON, Myanmar—Southeast Asian finance ministers wrapped up a meeting in Yangon on Saturday in an upbeat mood, saying their region was back in recovery mode after successive upheavals and the challenge was now to maintain that.

Ministers urged closer cooperation among the 10 members of their Association of South East Asian Nations to boost recovery, but conceded that different levels of development and market conditions in the diverse bloc meant no one economic formula would fit all.

Indonesian Finance Minister Boediono told reporters delegates had agreed the region was now recovering.

"The general message is that every one of us is rather upbeat. Although a couple of months ago it was a rather different psychology, now I think we are seeing that things are looking up."

Asked how recovery could be maintained, he replied: "By doing our homework, each of us, and working to cooperate together as much as possible."

Thai Finance Minister Somkid Jatusripitak told reporters the final statement of the meeting would refer to the "positive recovery" of the Asean region.

"Most countries in Asean are improving," he said. "Especially in Thailand now the momentum is very strong."

He said Thailand's target of a 3.5-percent economic growth this year was realistic if its main export market, the United States, saw a healthy recovery.

The Asian Development Bank delivered some good news to the meeting, saying the region was expected to see a "moderate" rebound this year helped by "very encouraging signs of recovery" in the United States and partial recovery in Europe.

But it warned that risks remained, given serious imbalances in the United States and high world oil prices and said the extent of the upturn would vary from country to country, depending and how much progress they had made on reform.

The mood put across by the ministers was in marked contrast to the gloom brought about by last year's global downturn, which compounded problems caused by Asia's 1997 financial meltdown.

Last year's downturn led to a big export slump in Asia, particularly hitting hi-tech producers such as Singapore and Japan, and ministers said the focus was now on boosting domestic demand through fiscal or monetary stimulus. ***Reuters***

Indonesian islands to be part of Singapore-US trade deal

LOBAM, Indonesia—A free trade deal being hammered out between the United States and Singapore will also include some goods made on two nearby islands of neighboring Indonesia, the Singapore government said Saturday.

The agreement, if completed, will be Washington's first free trade pact in Asia.

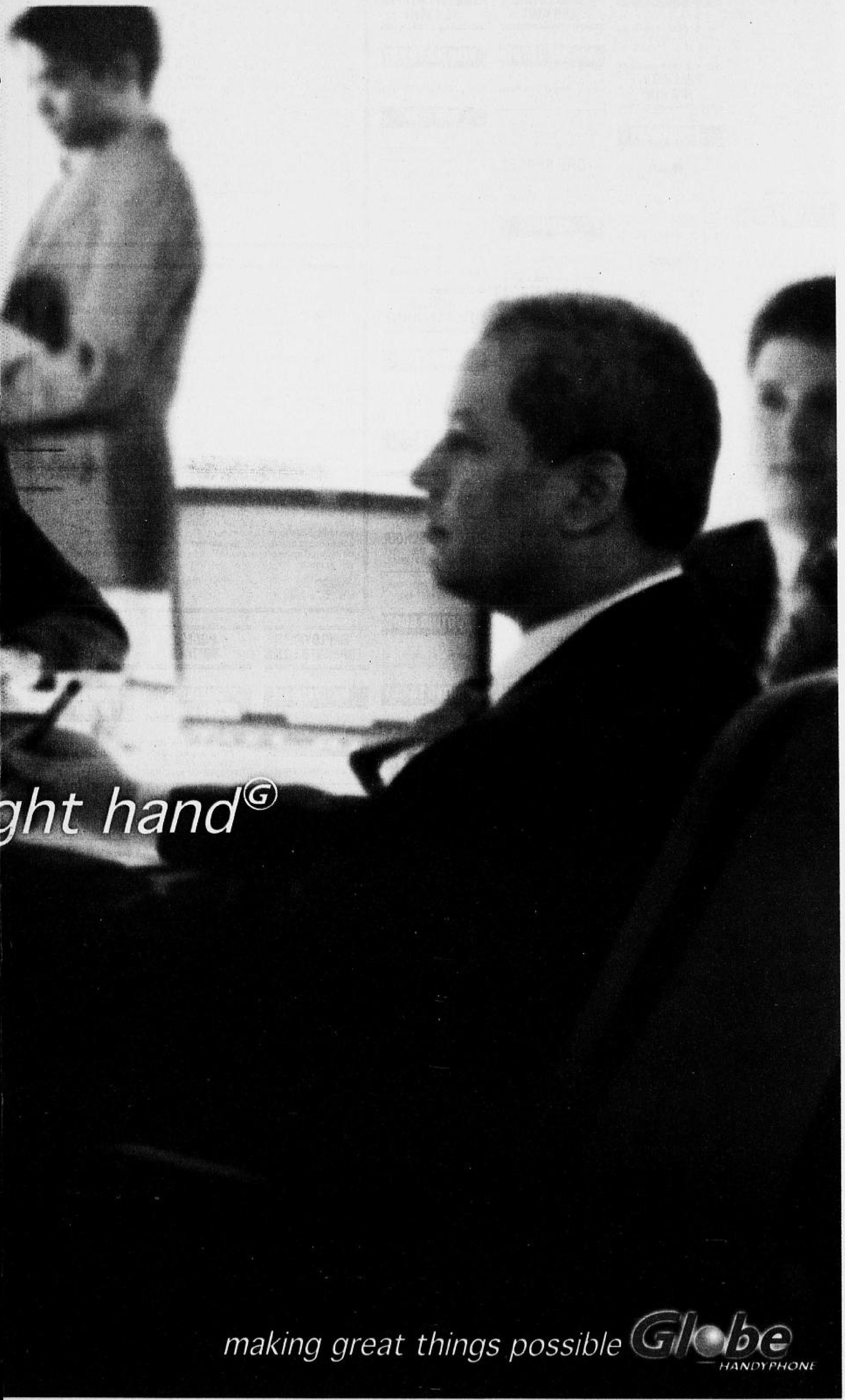
Under the deal, certain high-tech electronic goods made on Batam and Bintan, two Indonesian islands near Singapore, will be regarded as Singapore-made products, according to a Singapore government news release issued in Lobam town on the island of Bintan.

Indonesia is much poorer than ultramodern, highly developed Singapore. With the signing of the deal, companies operating on Batam and Bintan would have the twin benefits of cheaper labor and duty-free access to the United States through Singapore.

The deal is expected to create badly needed jobs in Indonesia, whose economy has recently been battered by a series of economic and political crises.

A Singapore government-linked conglomerate, SembCorp Industries Ltd., currently owns large industrial parks on both Bintan and Batam.

Batam is 20 km south of Singapore. Bintan lies just west of Batam. ***AP***



Mild US job growth eases rate worries

WASHINGTON—The latest US government data show that the job market is growing at a Goldilocks pace—fast enough to confirm an economic recovery but not hot enough to spur worries about imminent interest-rate rises.

The Labor Department said Friday that the number of workers on US payrolls grew by 58,000 in March. That was slightly larger than the 41,000 projected by private economists and was consistent with the beliefs the economy was climbing its way out of a recession that began a year ago.

But the labor market, as it typically does in economic recoveries, appears to be lagging the pace of expansion in the broader economy.

The unemployment rate rose two-tenths of a percentage point in March to 5.7 percent, the highest since December.

The payrolls data seemed much less impressive in light of a huge downward revision to February data, which fell 2,000 in contrast to the originally reported 66,000 gain.

"I think in the second quarter, we'll see much better job growth," said Henry Willmore, chief US economist at Bank of Tokyo/Mitsubishi.

"Firms have to be convinced that you have a self-sustaining recovery in place and so far they've reacted mainly by turning up hiring of temps—that was one of the bright spots in today's report—and increasing overtime," he said.

The average factory workweek rose to 41.1 hours in March from 40.7 hours in February. Workers at manufacturing plants logged an average of 4.2 hours of overtime, up from 3.9 hours in the prior month. ***Reuters***

Hubbard says reform needed to lift Japan

WASHINGTON—A senior US official on Friday suggested that action, as well as words, were needed to revive Japan's troubled economy.

Glenn Hubbard, a top economic adviser to US President George W. Bush, told Reuters it was crucial for the health of the world's second largest economy that the government of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi tackle the problems of deflation and the bad loans hanging over the banking sector.

"The Koizumi administration has continued to articulate a reform agenda, which the president believes is very important for Japan," Hubbard said. "The implementation has not been as timely as the policy announcements. I think that a recovery and vigorous growth in Japan, which are very possible, await those reforms. Without reforms there won't be meaningful recovery."

The comments from Hubbard, who is chair of Bush's Council of Economic Advisers, represented a relatively candid assessment of the Japanese economy from a US administration that has generally made a point of treading lightly when offering public comments about its key trading partner. ***Reuters***

Ford Motor moves to stop the bleeding

DETROIT—Ford Motor Co. took the unusual move this week of reporting that it produced no vehicles at all last month at Michigan Truck, a sprawling factory outside Detroit once known as the most profitable auto assembly plant on Earth.

But like Ford itself, which many industry analysts believe will succeed in turning itself around after last year's tailspin, production from Michigan Truck is due to come roaring back to life later this spring.

"They've been in the hospital, in intensive care, but they're not critical," Gerald Meyers, a University of Michigan business professor, said of the world's second largest automaker.

Meyers, who headed American Motors Corp. before it dissolved in the 1980s, knows some of the challenges Ford faces as an ailing industrial giant in a brutally competitive business environment.

And he is among auto industry experts who believe the turnaround plan Ford announced in January gives it a chance of returning to profitability after last year's massive losses.

"I know there's been criticism about their plan being weak or insufficient. It is not. It's an aggressive plan, a courageous plan," said Meyers. ***Reuters***

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Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO BID

NETWORK EQUIPMENT & FURNITURE FOR SSS BINONDO

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM is inviting bidders for the following:

1) Thirty-five (35) units Ethernet Switch with the following specifications:
   - 24 Ethernet 10BASE-T ports
   - Two Fast Ethernet auto-negotiating 10BASE-T/100BASE-TX ports
   - Matrix port for connecting units in the switch:
     - Connect two units back-to-back using a single Matrix Cable
     - Connect up to four units using Matrix Cables linked to a Matrix Module
   - Slot for Expansion Module
   - Slot for a Transceiver Module (10Mbps Ethernet)
   - Connects to Redundant Power System/Uninterruptible Power System
   - 19-inch rack or stand-alone mounting
   - 50/60 Hz, 90-240V A.C., 3 amps (maximum)
   - Support SNMP standard
2) Supply & Installation of System and Contract Furniture for SSS Binondo Branch Office

			Minimum Requirements
Lot I	-	System Furniture	- 2 years experience; with plant Facilities & powder coating process
Lot II	-	Contract Furniture	- 2 years experience in customized Furniture works
Lot III	-	Seating	- 2 years experience

List of pre-qualification requirements must be obtained from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 922-2991 and 920-6401 local 5490/ 5491. Below is the deadline for the submission of pre-qualification documents, at the same address.

Item No.	Deadline
Item 1	April 16, 2002
Item 2	April 17, 2002

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the System. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the System guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ERNESTO G. GASIS**
Assistant Vice President
and Acting Chairman, Bids &
Awards Committee

(PDI--April 8, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City, Metro Manila 1103
Tel. Nos. 372-5057 • 372-5043
Fax Nos. 372-5048 • 372-5061

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources, Department of Agriculture (DA-BFAR), invites qualified bidders/suppliers to participate in the bidding of **"Major repair of Cherokee Jeep"**, later than **2:00 PM** on **April 16, 2002.**

Bid form together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Interested bidders are required to submit the following requirements upon securing bidding forms: photocopies of Business License, Certificate of Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (original copies to be shown for authentication purposes).

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.**
Director

(PDI -- Apr. 8, 2002)

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Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ENGR. DEMETRIO D. COPUYOC

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and deepest appreciation to all those who sent flowers and messages of sympathy, offered masses and prayers, spent precious time with us and expressed in many other ways their love, concern and support during our time of greatest sorrow.

We are also humbly grateful to God in knowing that Demetrio lived as a man of great talent and unparalleled vision who touched so many lives and organizations in his pursuit of excellence.

"My soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from Him;
He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken."
Psalm 62:1

In memory of our beloved

VIRGINIA UY ANG

Who peacefully joined her Creator on April 7, 2002
at the age of 67.

Her loving husband **Engracio**; children **Melody & Roland, Grace & Angel, Anthony (†) & Joan, Margie & Wahoo, Irene & Francis, Jun-Jun & Cynthia**; sister **Betty**; grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Faith Chapel, Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment to be announced later.

Please omit flowers.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

Our Dearly Beloved Mama

SOCORRO OSIDO-CHING

peacefully joined our Creator on April 3, 2002
at the age of 72.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels (Chapel-I), Guadalupe, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, April 9, 2002, 8:00 AM at the Loyola Crematorium after the 7:00 AM Mass.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord" 2 Corinthians 5:8

Message of Thanks

The bereaved family

wife LAGRIMAS "GUIING" DYPIANGCO TOLENTINO
daughter MARY GRACE, *husband* LEO TENGCO, *children* JAY & KAY
son GERRY, *wife* NORMA LIMON,
children GERARD ANGELO, GENEVA & GERALDINE
brothers FRANK, JUAN, ALFONSO, *sisters-in-law* NENE & MARY
and other relatives of

CONRADO GONZALES TOLENTINO

November 26, 1926 to April 4, 2002

TOLENTINO AUTO SUPPLY CO.
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wish to convey their heartfelt gratitude to all who grieved with them at the time of their great loss and sorrow.

The Lord's Servant

THE MOST REV. MACARIO VILCHES GA

Former Supreme Bishop, Iglesia Filipina Independiente

Has finally rested from his labors and peacefully returned to his Master and Great Shepherd of his soul on April 4, 2002 at the age of 89.

His body now lies in state at the Rolling Hills Memorial Chapels, Bacolod City.

A Solemn Requiem Mass will be celebrated on April 13, 2002 at 1:00 p.m. at the Bacolod Memorial Park Chapel. Interment will immediately follow.

His bereaved wife **Virginia**, children - **Nestor J. Gargarita, Jr.** and **Ma. Imelda**; **William** and **Araceli Ga Eisenman**; and grandchildren **Ryan** and **Dylan Gargarita**; **Christian** and **Chester Villanueva**; nephews and nieces, relatives and friends; and

The Clergy and faithful of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am My servant also will be."
- John 12:16

LINA TEODORO-MORAN

Began her eternal life on Saturday, April 6, 2002
at the age of 55.

Her parents **Prudencio "Dee"** (†) and **Rose Teodoro**; children **Manolito, Crickett,** and **Missy**; brother, sisters, and in-laws, **Jay, Dory & Ed Ledesma, Macci, Tim & Felice, Deedee & Gigi**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

A memorial Mass will be offered at the Assumption Convent Chapel, San Lorenzo Village, Makati City at 6:00 p.m., Monday, April 8, 2002, to be followed by Novena Prayers at the Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City from April 9 to 14, 2002 after the 6:00 p.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the St. Martin's Technical School, Baguio City made through the Assumption College Alumni Association will be appreciated.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

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Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

INFOTECH
Editor **Leo Magno**

YOU.inq7.net: Going beyond online news

By Joey G. Alarilla
INQ7.net

AS the Internet continues to change the way we work and play, websites must go beyond simply providing information if they want to become indispensable to the lives of more Filipinos.

While it has already won the loyalty of a global audience of news readers, INQ7.net at www.inq7.net has evolved into the springboard for thriving online communities. By offering interactive tools, online and mobile services and user-generated content, the site is encouraging the growth of communities catering to specific user groups.

With the launch of the YOU.inq7.net portal, today's interactive youth is creating its own online community together with INQ7.net. INQ7 Interactive Inc. is the joint online news delivery company of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc.

What sets YOU apart from other youth-oriented sites is the emphasis on user-generated content, with 90 percent of the site written by the readers themselves.

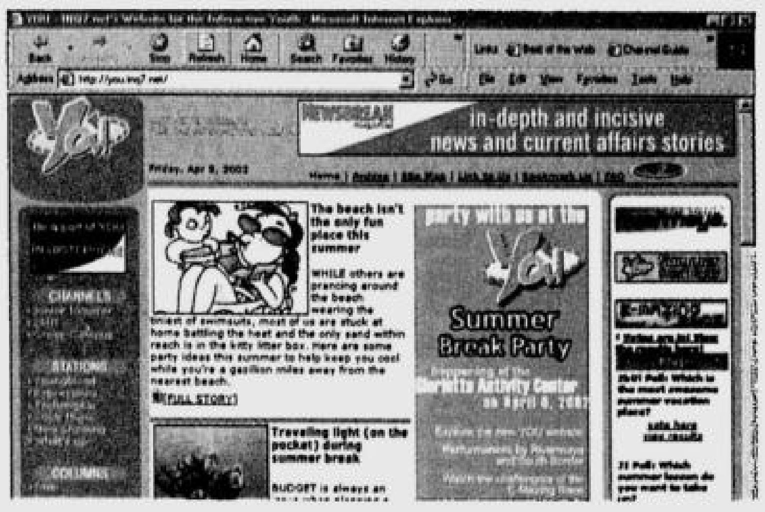
"YOU, in a very real sense, is a partnership between INQ7.net and the youth," INQ7 president and CEO Paolo R. Prieto said.

Prieto stressed that YOU will be the website for "this generation's thoughts and aspirations."

YOU at http://you.inq7.net was formally launched on April 6 at the Glorietta Activity Center during the "YOU Summer Break Party." The portal is the umbrella site for three main channels: 2bU!, Cross-Campus and Junior Inquirer.

2bU! is the Wednesday lifestyle section of the INQUIRER, while JI

YOU.INQ7.NET/ B11



The beach isn't the only fun place this summer

WHILE others are prancing around the beach wearing the tiniest of swimsuits, most of us are stuck at home battling the heat and the only sand within reach is in the kitty litter box. Here are some party ideas this summer to help keep you cool while you're a gazillion miles away from the nearest beach.

FULL STORY

Traveling light (on the pocket) during summer break

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Philips takes new approach for multimedia GPRS phones

By Leo Magno

WHEN buying a cell phone and you go to one of the two big cellular mobile telephone service (CMTS) operators in the country—either Globe Telecom or Smart Communications—chances are they'd offer you a bundled package which consists of the phone itself and the line (either prepaid or plan). Seven out of 10 chances are these operators would offer you a Nokia phone, since the Finnish cell phone giant has around 70 percent of the market in the Philippines.

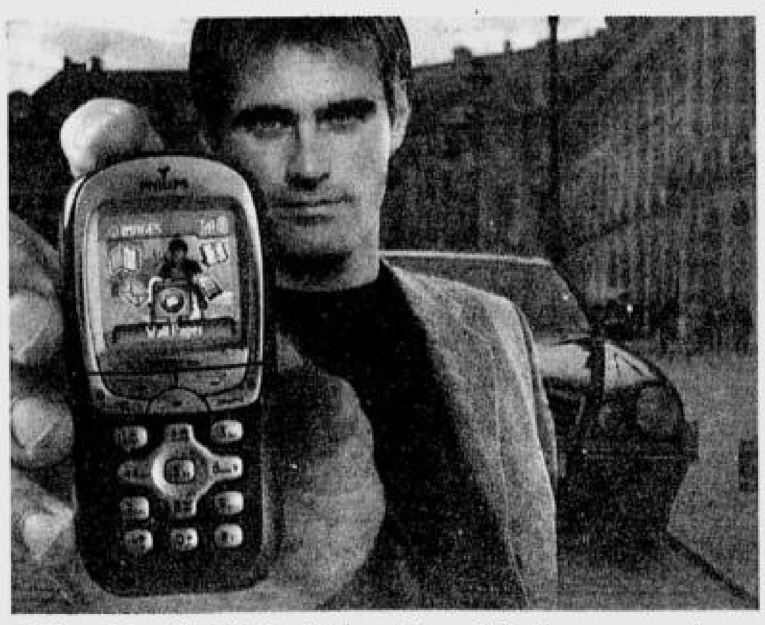
These are the two hurdles which Dutch company Philips has to clear as they launch three new cellular phone models after streamlining their mobile communications business. The Philippine cell phone handset industry is very CMTS operator-driven, and it is lorded over by Nokia.

Figures from Dataquest show that Nokia has a 30.6-percent share of the global market in terms of handsets sold. Motorola comes in second at 14.6 percent, Ericsson third at 10 percent, Siemens fourth at 6.5 percent followed by Asian companies Panasonic and Samsung with 4.2 percent and 4 percent respectively. Philips is tied with NEC at 10th with a 2.9-percent global market share.

In the Philippines, Philips faces a more daunting problem with Nokia cornering a bigger share of the local market (about seven out of 10 units sold in the Philippines is a Nokia). Because of this, the CMTS operators are more inclined to follow the market flow by offering more Nokias in their packages.

This leaves Philips with a delicate balancing act as they roll out their latest Fisio line of multimedia GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) phones in the country. They have to partner with the CMTS operators which subsidize part of the handset cost to be offered as a package with the cell phone line, and at the same time become retail-driven and push their products off the shelves without alienating Globe and Smart which are essentially their partners in selling their phones.

"We look at countries in segments, whether they are retail-driven with no operator involvement, or the low-tier product market with 100-percent operator involvement," said Bob Pillay, general manager of Philips Consumer Communications for Southeast Asia and Taiwan. "The Philippines is very operator-driven. Philips is seriously committed to the Philippine market. We've changed our business model, and we're not in it for the short-term."



THIS multimedia GPRS cell phone has a full-color screen and can send and receive e-mail with picture attachments.

Part of the change Pillay is referring to involves transforming Philips, a company known for technological innovations and is very strong in product design and engineering (Philips invented the compact disc), into a consumer-driven company.

"Nowadays, an engineer can't just come up with a product just because he had a dream one night and decided to build the product," Pillay said. "Philips is technology-driven, but now you have to understand a set of requirements from certain market segments, and that's going to come from the consumers."

This thrust has led Philips through the development of its Fisio line of multimedia GPRS cellular phones.

GPRS is an operator service which is more than four times faster than the current GSM lines in the Philippines. The extra wireless bandwidth can be used for richer cellular applications such as sending and receiving audio and images. GPRS is the next step toward 3G or the third generation of mobile service, which promises full multimedia features including video. Think of GPRS and 3G as a bigger highway, where more cars (applications and services such as multimedia) can travel. And this highway is always open—you are always connected to the GPRS network, meaning you don't need to dial-up or connect to the Internet unlike current WAP services.

The Fisio line is targeted at such applications, starting with the high-end Fisio 820 which has a large screen (up to nine lines of text or 150 characters onscreen) which is full-color, Bluetooth connectivity and the fastest GPRS available in the market today (GPRS Class 10). Via e-mail attachment, you can even send, receive and store colored pictures and use them as your phone's screensaver or wallpaper. And, when you're on a GPRS network, you can even send and retrieve your existing POP3 e-mail (whether your home or office e-mail address) and not WAP e-mail which requires you to dial up first to access your e-mail account.

The Fisio 820 is also sleek, weighing in at just 85 grams and coming at striking colors of Sahara (light gold), Crystal (light blue) and Mars (high-gloss red). The built-in Bluetooth feature allows the phone to be connected to other devices such as a PC or PDA for up to 10 meters away. It also includes other Philips originals like voice command and recording, where you can dial a number simply by stating a name or record a conversation for up to 30 seconds. The Fisio also has a unique navigation system which allows the keypad itself to be used as a navigation tool. The long battery life associated with Philips phones is also there, with a talk time of more than five hours and a standby time of up to 12 days.

The Fisio 620 is also a GPRS phone but features instead a thumbstick as a navigation tool. It has a built-in organizer and fax modem, and can also be synchronized with a PC. Meanwhile, the Fisio 120 is the entry-level model which features a high degree of personalization at a competitive price.

Another high-speed ISP rises in RP

By Joel D. Pinaroc

THE DREAM of local Internet users for a high-speed Internet service that is at par with those found in more developed countries just got closer following the announcement of Netopia, a local Internet service provider (ISP). Netopia has signed a deal with chipmaker Intel Corp., software giant Microsoft Corp. and telecommunications carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and its subsidiary ePLDT to set up one of the first high-bandwidth Internet cafés in the Philippines.

The partnership is called "Digital Paradise," and once the upgrade is completed, Netopia will be able to offer one of the fastest Internet access rates in the country, company executives claim, as it will standardize on the products and services of its partners.

Netopia's partners are expected to invest almost P2 million to upgrade an existing Netopia branch into a "Digital Paradise."

Netopia, which operates 39 branches, mostly located in Manila and surrounding areas, is set to use the latest Pentium 4 microprocessors from Intel, the latest software from Microsoft, high-speed digital subscriber lines (DSL) from PLDT and the latest services from ePLDT to upgrade its infrastructure to provide Internet access speeds of up to 512 Kbps.

While an increase in access costs seem to be inevitable with its infrastructure upgrade, Netopia president Raymond Ricafort claims the rates of Internet access will not be compromised.

"While we cannot hope to match the rates of small ISPs, a majority of which offer sub-par access speeds, our access rates are competitive," Ricafort said, noting that rates for Netopia's Internet service will be from P25 to P50 depending on location. "Prices will depend on the location of our branches, since some of them are in big malls that also charge high rental fees."

Executives claim that Netopia is currently "servicing" 700,000 users per month, with more speed junkies expected to avail of the ISP's services, with 70 Netopia branches being eyed by yearend.

Netopia, which is partly owned by ePLDT, Newnet Holdings and a handful of businessmen, will be one of the first high-speed Internet access providers in the country following the setup of the e-Lounge, a similar initiative that also seeks to provide high-speed access to local Internet users. However, Netopia has a different business model.

Ricafort also disclosed that Netopia has no revenue sharing agreement with its partners, although the initiative is expected to benefit Netopia partners in related areas. Microsoft, for instance, will be utilizing the partnership in its anti-piracy campaign, while chipmaker Intel is seen getting marketing mileage in promoting its Pentium 4 processors from the pact.

Qnet chosen finalist in int'l kiosk awards

QNET Video Phone Station, a communications technology project of Qnet Communications Inc. and AJOnet Holdings Inc., was recently selected as a finalist in the "2002 Interactive Kiosk Excellence Awards" held recently in Orlando, Florida.

As a finalist-both for "Best Public Communications Kiosk Application" and "Most Innovative/Creative Kiosk Software Application" categories, Qnet was the lone Philippine representative to the Awards and was one among 24 entries from primarily North America and Europe that made it to the finals. This annual event seeks to recognize the best kiosk implementations. The Awards intend to showcase the best kiosk applications and designs for the many industries that currently use interactive kiosks. The winners will set the standards of excellence for future kiosk implementations.

For this event, a Qnet Video Phone Station was shipped to Orlando, Florida for the judges' final "hands-on" testing.

Qnet Communications Inc. provides enhanced communications services like video-conferencing, photomail, videomail and Internet access to those without access to a telephone, mobile phone or the Internet.

Edsamail drops free e-mail service

By Erwin Oliva

AYALA-owned Internet firm Edsamail announced that it would no longer offer free e-mail services to subscribers in the Philippines and in Singapore.

In a customer service advisory posted on its website, the company said the "discontinuance" of their free e-mail service is a reflection of what is happening in other countries.

"Leading e-mail service providers have recently announced the discontinuance of their free e-mail service or have implemented stricter policies on e-mail usage," the company said.

Edsamail cited companies like USA.net, which stopped providing free e-mail services, as it introduced paid services in 1999, and AltaVista.com, which ended its free Web-based e-mail last March 31, 2002.

"Because of all these changes in the Internet and financial world, Edsamail has also been forced to re-evaluate its business model. Regretfully, we will have to start charging each subscriber for the cost of the operation. Though advertising subsidizes a portion of the cost of operations, unfortunately, it is not enough to cover all expenses for us to continue to provide the best quality dial-up and e-mail service," the company said.

The company said loyal subscribers would, however, enjoy its "unlimited Internet access for e-mail" for a fee of P1 a day.

They would also get an upgraded version of Edsamail's e-mail software, the company stated.

"It's the same price as sending a text message to a friend, but even better. You get unlimited internet access for e-mail for only P365 for one entire year," the company added.

Edsamail said it also giving "loyal subscribers" access to its Web-based Edsamail.

YOU.inq7.net: Going beyond online news

(From page B10)

comes out every Saturday. The combination of the two targets audiences from their preteens to their early 20s. Cross-Campus is an online original which includes news, opinion and feature stories about various campuses in the country.

INQ7.net executive editor and vice president Leo Magno pointed out that the site offers a venue for young writers. Through sections such as Expressions and Youngblood, readers not only have the chance to be published but also to reach out to a global audience via the Internet.

YOU also allows readers to instantly voice their thoughts using mobile technology. The site offers SMS (short message service)-based features such as the YOU Polls, which allow readers to vote on different issues, and YOU TXT, which allows them to post their text messages on the site.

Magno pointed out that interaction among users is the key to a successful online community.

"You have to let these users interact with each other, give feedback to each other and tell the site developers what they think. The readers become partners in content generation and are also the consumers of the content within the site. YOU has to act as both editor and webmaster, maintaining a high quality of service by constantly listening to the readers," Magno said.

The YOU launch showcased activities that catered to the different segments of the youth and which offered attendees hands-on experience with the site's different features. To kick off the day-long celebration, YOU held a kiddie parade which showcased the site's Junior Inquirer section. Apart from enjoying the parade and circus show, kids had a chance to unleash their creativity in a coloring contest.

The Internet's importance as a community-building tool was also underscored with the Philippine Schools CyberFair project organized by the Philippine Internet Commerce Society, Iskul.org and INQ7.net. The winners in this school-based, collaborative project were announced as part of the YOU launch activities.

The INQUIRER is also a major sponsor of the Philippine Schools CyberFair. The broadsheet is sponsoring the award for the environment category, in line with the INQUIRER's commitment to protecting the environment and increasing public awareness on environmental issues.

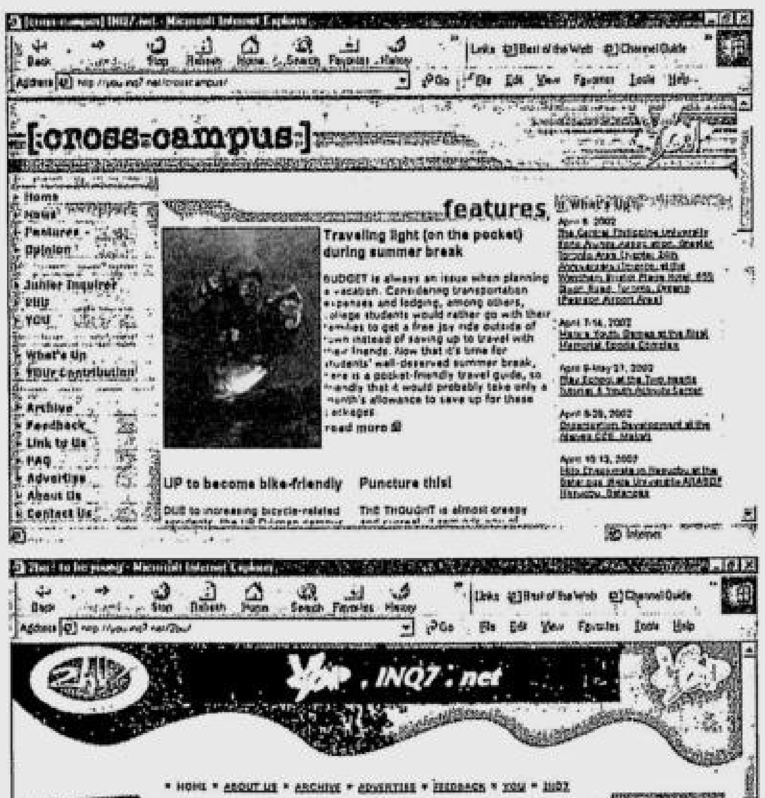
The proud survivors of the interactive E-mazing Race were also crowned during the YOU launch, representing the climax of an adventure that posed physical and mental challenges in the real and virtual worlds. Instead of Africa or a South Pacific island, the Glorietta mall and cyberspace became the battleground for these would-be survivors.

Prior to the race itself, readers nominated the participating teams online and via SMS. And instead of scheming tribe members, readers determined who would qualify for one of the slots in the E-mazing Race by using the online forms or texting their votes.

Moreover, instead of simply launching and showing off the YOU site, an innovative fashion show by YOU and Sari-Sari featured fashion statements inspired by the YOU site itself. Students and amateur models showed off trendy designs representing the different YOU sections and services.

Two of the country's most popular bands then provided the perfect nightcap with performances from Rivermaya and South Border.

In the end, the battle for the hearts and minds of Netizens will not be won simply by generating page views. Instead, sites will continue to become more interactive, transforming information into services—and readers into full-blown users.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what's up?

CROSS-CAMPUS, 2bU and Junior Inquirer are the three main channels of YOU, INQ7.net's website for the interactive youth.

Interactive race winners announced

THEY came, they saw—and one team conquered.

Team Savages—composed of Jason Robert Averia (20), Manny Batungbakal (33) and Tiff Pagal (21)—won the E-mazing Race. The team bested 10 other challengers, finishing the contest in one hour and 53 minutes. The E-mazing Race took the contestants throughout the mall and even into cyberspace—as they strove to solve puzzles and unlock clues by logging on to the YOU.inq7.net site.

"It was a great experience. We never expected to win," Pagal said in an interview after the awarding ceremony.

The finals of the E-mazing Race was held on April 6 at the Glorietta Activity Center, as part of the "YOU Summer Break Party."

YOU is INQ7.net's website for the interactive youth. INQ7 Interactive Inc. is the joint-venture online news delivery company of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc.

Averia pointed out that the victory was particularly sweet because their team was not even supposed to be in the finals. In the online and SMS (short message service) voting among YOU readers to determine which teams would qualify for the seven finals slots, Team Savages placed eighth.

"We weren't even supposed to be here if the other team hadn't backed out, so this is really a great win for us. This was the first time we tried anything like this," Averia said.

Four guest teams also competed in the E-mazing Race, including contingents from INQUIRER's 2bUI, Planet X, INQ7.net/INQUIRER, and Cyberpress, the organization of Philippine information technology journalists. *Joey Alarilla, INQ7.net*

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Can son bring back glory days of PNB?

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BANKER Francisco A. Dizon never thought twice about accepting the government's offer to sit as chair of the Philippine National Bank (PNB), the country's sixth biggest lender.

Dizon says: "It's a sort of homecoming for me because PNB was an integral part of my life. My father practically spent his entire career in PNB. I grew up wanting to work in a big bank like PNB."

Dizon beamed when he related how his father, Bienvenido Y. Dizon, worked his way to the top in PNB—from a messenger-clerk in 1928 to president in 1962.

"My father grew up in an era when loyalty and integrity came first before material values. When they work for a bank, they dedicate their life to serving it," he says.

Dizon, however, admits that PNB was now a mere shadow of its former greatness. The former banking giant has stumbled from its lofty position partly due to a botched sequence of privatization moves starting in the late 1980s that has forced the government to raise its equity in PNB back to 45 percent at par with taipan Lucio Tan.

FRANCISCO Dizon

BIENVENIDO Dizon

(Dizon described it as "two steps forward, one step back.")

"I felt that I couldn't let what my father helped to build for more than 30 years of his life to just go to waste. As chair of PNB, I would be in a better position to steer back the bank to its old glory," Dizon says.

Although as chair, he would have to defer to the PNB president who will run the show. The bank president is currently Feliciano Miranda who is set to retire. UCPB president Lorenzo Tan is rumored to take over the post.

Dizon says he would still have an influential role in mapping out PNB's strategy and vision.

Though his main role is to be a stabilizer in a board which is equally divided between govern-

CAN/ C2

Foreigners must now get work permits

By Vishnu Hathiramani

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment will now require most foreigners to secure their work permit. This is contained in DOLE Order No. 12.

The omnibus guidelines have already been issued and are one of the concrete policies that support the call of President Macapagal-Arroyo to create jobs by attracting investments through investor-friendly policies and streamlined government policies. These guidelines would rationalize, streamline and standardize the rules and regulation, and in the process provide consistency, transparency and predictability in the applications throughout the regions.

The guidelines have gone through the overall supervision of Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Undersecretary Manuel G. Imson and have carefully been handled by Atty. Teresita R. Manzala, director IV of DOLE and many more involved in this process. A difficult job, indeed.

The final deadline for securing such permit is Wednesday, April 10. The original date was supposed to be March 11 but upon the request of the Philippine-based 51-year-old Filipino Indian Chamber of Commerce, the new date was set.

Such rule has actually existed but was never strictly implemented.

Basically a native born alien holding a native born certificate of resident (NBCR) or a legal immigrant, under the so-called quota system, ASIO, R.A. 324, Note Verbal, etc. holding an immigrant certificate of resident (ICR) should have applied and secured an alien employment registration certificate (AERC). This was just a formal registration with DOLE but was never taken seriously. Unofficial report says that only 5,000 applied last year.

On the other hand, an alien employment permit (AEP) was issued to foreigners seeking work in this country. However, before such issuance they had to pass through the strict approval of the Bureau of Immigration, Board of Investments and other government agencies. The rate of compliance of those securing such a permit was quite high, since these were a necessity before approval of other government agencies.

With the new order, only AEP will be issued to all foreigners. The previously issued AERC will have to be replaced by all those holding it. To simplify matters, DOLE has prepared four kinds of forms to be applied by four different groups of foreigners.

Form Annex C-1 has to be submitted by all resident foreign nationals: native born permanent residents, permanent residents. Presidents of corporations, self-owned company owners, multi-company connected or exclusive company salesman, regular and part-time workers, and others have to apply. This will apply to the entire family members who are working and not just the head only. Each working member in the company must file for the work permit. In other words, if you are not working or cannot prove how you are being supported, then what are you doing in the Philippines?

All those in the above category must file for new application, while holders of existing AERP must immediately file for replacement of AEP before April 10 or else they will be penalized.

Form Annex C-2 requires all non-indo refugees to apply for such work permits.

Form Annex C-3 requires all non-resident foreign nationals to apply for such work permits. This refers to non-immigrant foreign nationals admitted to temporary stay in the Philippines.

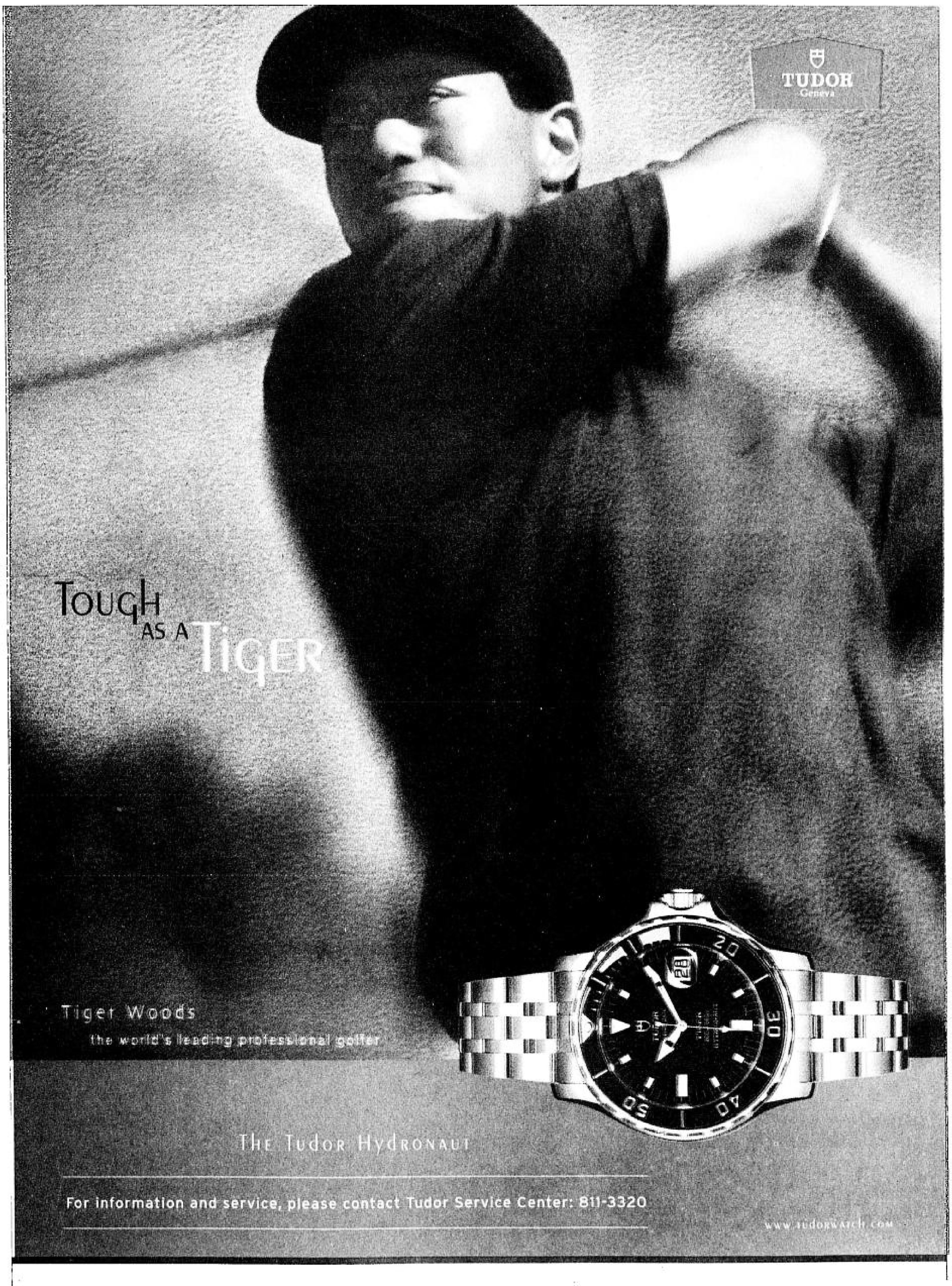
Form Annex C-4 requires all existing holders of SIRV, SRRV, 9D and 47A2 visa to apply for work using this form of application. This applies to position of executive, advisory, supervisory, or technical position in any establishment.

Special investors resident visas are issued to those who have investment in this country.

Special retirees resident visas are issued for those who wish to retire in this country.

9D visas are divided into two categories: International treaty traders or international treaty investors.

FOREIGNERS/ C4



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Can son bring back glory days of PNB?

From page C1

ment interests and entrepreneurial aspirations, Dizon—a former president and CEO of Asian Bank (1992 to 1994) and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (1997 to 2000)—says he will still chip in his two cents worth in PNB's game plan.

Strategy

In his mind, Dizon says PNB should draw heavily on its history to bring the bank back on its feet while taking a sharply distinct route in its march towards respectability and profits.

Despite its tarnished reputation, Dizon says PNB remains a potent bank with its 2.2 million depositors and 320 branches nationwide that only a handful of banks could boast of topping.

Dizon says PNB still owned one of the most well known brand names in the industry despite being left behind in the rankings by merged local banks and aggressive foreign banks.

He found it surprising that PNB did not capitalize on these attributes to build a strong presence in consumer banking—from automotive loans to real estate financing to credit card.

"We have 2.2 million depositors yet we only have 20,000 credit card holders while other banks with a much smaller depositor base have more credit card holders," Dizon says.

Current market conditions have likewise made it almost an imperative for PNB to shift its market focus. It could not simply remain as a big bank for the big boys because banks much bigger than PNB are cornering all the corporate accounts in the market.

Dizon asks: "How can we stay in the game if we cater mainly to corporate accounts when corporations are demanding to get loans at rates below T-bill rates?"

He says retail banking offers consumer loans to remittance services a lot of growth opportunities especially for banks like PNB with a strong brand name, extensive branch network, and huge depositor base.

But can old banks still learn new tricks?

PNB might have been on the road to full privatization over the last decade but its stodgy image of a bureaucratic bank for bureaucrats endures.

Dizon is optimistic that the bank's employees are up to the task of a major overhauling. Based on his previous visits to PNB branches outside Metro Manila, Dizon says employees remained loyal to the bank and hopeful on its recovery despite months of uncertainty caused by the bank's financial troubles.

He recalls that during the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, his father also remained loyal to the bank and sanguine on its future despite the war.

The elder Dizon was a cashier in PNB's Bacolod branch and was holding a lot of the bank's cash when the war broke out. Together with a friend, the elder Dizon went to a remote field to bury the money and hide it from the Japanese army.

"He was positive that the war would have to end sometime and that PNB would resume its operations to serve its clients," he says.

PNB was among the first banks to reopen after Japan surrendered to the Americans.

In the next few decades, the elder Dizon would move his way up to the bank's hierarchy to become its president in 1962 when the bank became the first billion-peso bank in the Philippines.

Not unlike his father before him, Dizon has an unwavering vision that PNB would come out of the trenches and regain its position as one of the country's premier banks.

Global sourcing through e-commerce

(Part II)

MAPping theFuture

Carol E. Carreon

LAST week, I promised to provide three examples of how Philippines corporations are leveraging opportunities for global outsourcing through e-commerce. Here they are.

Universal Robina Corp.

Universal Robina Corp. manufactures food products and consumer branded packaged goods from headquarters in Pasig City, Philippines. The 5,000-person company is a division of conglomerate J.G. Summit Co., which is also involved in textiles, electronics, telecommunications, airlines, banking, petrochemicals and hotels in the South East Asian nation.

Universal Robina rings in sales of over P1 billion a month, or approximately $20 million.

Before automation, the purchasing process at Universal Robina could take up to three weeks. A corporate office supplies department head was responsible for preparing purchase requisitions and sending them to the purchasing department, which went through the typical Philippine spot buying process.

Universal Robina was spending P1 million a month on office supplies with Contrade Inc., one of the Philippines' top office supply distributors. The company processed over 50 requisitions for office supplies from a number of different departments a month.

Universal Robina implemented a procurement portal using BayanTrade, letting each department designate a requisitioner to order supplies online directly. It established a purchasing contract with Contrade after bidding out volume commitments, on average saving 50 centavos per line item.

Using BayanTrade, requisition ordering times at Universal Robina have dropped from three weeks to less than a week. In many cases, orders are received within one day, as orders placed in the morning are often delivered in the afternoon.

Universal Robina has been able to reduce its office supply inventory by 50 percent, with orders delivered directly to the different departments or offices.

The firm never calculated the cost of processing purchase orders, but anecdotally has experienced a savings in processing costs as well, as the office supply manager does not need to create purchase orders, nor manually turn to purchasing or management for approvals.

Instead, she spends time on strategic sourcing of MRO commodities, aggregating demand, and bidding.

Aboitiz One

Aboitiz & Co. Inc. is a Philippine conglomerate whose businesses include power generation and distribution, banking, food production, transportation and logistics, real estate development, industrial production, construction and industrial trading.

Aboitiz One is the conglomerate's domestic and international air, sea, and land delivery and logistics Service Company. Made up of three divisions, the 13-year old company started out using BayanTrade to help support its domestic air operations.

Similar to Universal Robina, Aboitiz One's purchasing process could take weeks, as the purchasing department researched prices for every requisition and placed purchase orders only once a month. Using BayanTrade, the firm has seen purchasing approval processes drop from four to five days to one to two days through the use of workflow.

Now buyers are focusing on more strategic sourcing initiatives, like mission critical MRO, such as hard-to-find specialized parts for its aircraft. In addition, buyers have more time to identify new suppliers and conduct negotiation meetings, which never happened in the past.

In addition, Aboitiz has used the e-Bidding capabilities at BayanTrade to identify less expensive sources for some of its resaleable goods. While the firm had some three to six-month contracts to supply items it resells in its business, like envelopes, boxes, plastic wrap and tape, most arrangements were informal and subject to considerable price fluctuations.

The firm held a reverse auction for suppliers of plastic pouches and received a bid 30 percent below what it had been paying, even though the firm had been content with the existing supplier. Another bidding event resulted in savings of P500,000 (approximately $10,000) on boxes over six months.

Unilab

United Laboratories, one of the leading pharmaceutical companies in the Philippines, has operations spanning manufacturing and distribution of generic drugs.

In line with Unilab's objective of 'turning productivity to profitability,' the company moved into the new economy by improving its competitiveness externally and the quality of service internally through e-procurement.

The Unilab team went to great lengths to configure its system and reengineer business processes to enable a company-wide rollout.

The traditional procurement process was exhausting for Unilab. A long line of required authorizations and approvals took anywhere between three weeks to a month before the user could get what he needed.

As a result, "maverick buying" by users was common, and reduced productivity. It was also time consuming to research and accredit new suppliers.

With the introduction of BayanTrade's services, the procurement personnel are no longer involved in day-to-day buying. Instead, users are empowered to make purchases with pre-approved budgets from accredited suppliers. Another advantage is the complete transparency and adherence to company policies integration into BayanTrade provides.

The procurement role has also evolved dramatically as a result. The procurement team is no longer perceived as 'converters of PO's'. Instead, they are tasked to be strategic organizers in negotiating contracts and identifying and accrediting reliable suppliers.

The savings incurred from dealing with the right suppliers benefits Unilab by immediately converting lower expenditures into savings that go to the company's bottom line.

By banking on long term relationships with its suppliers, and seeing all their products on line at all times through e-catalogues, the procurement process turn-around-time became immediate.

Suppliers also see the value behind dealing with Unilab through BayanTrade because their costs are lowered and they are able to always provide the best costs. Unilab benefits from having access to an expansive supplier list and growing industry knowledge.

At the moment, Unilab sources out only its MRO's through the e-procurement service but is moving towards procurement of its production items materials in the near future, having realized the benefits of doing business with its suppliers through the BayanTrade e-Marketplace and the level playing field it provides.

The e-Marketplace puts Unilab at par with the rest of the conglomerates within the founding consortium.

Bottom line

The lesson for Philippine enterprises is that if you're not already leveraging e-commerce, you're being eft behind.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author who is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and president and CEO of Bayantrade Dotcom Inc. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

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Can Philippine cities compete in the global market?

By Roberto F. de Ocampo
President, Asian Institute of Management

WITH progress of globalization, cities find themselves at the forefront of industrialization and development. Due to rapid improvements in communication and transportation technology, businesses have become unshackled by the burdens of space and time.

The geographic limitations of cities have become secondary, allowing urban centers in industrial and developing countries to compete on level ground. Cities like Iligan and Iloilo now compete against Singapore and San Francisco in attracting the investments and human resources required to promote economic growth, job generation and the improvement in the standard of living of its residents.

Due to decentralization, the burden of creating an environment that is conducive for a thriving business sector has shifted from the national government to the city officials themselves. Hence, the national government's poverty alleviation programs hinge mainly on the capacity of cities to produce job opportunities for their steadily increasing populations.

The Local Government Code has provided local governments with the impetus to develop policies tailored to local conditions and requirements. This rapidly changing global environment necessitates that cities adopt competitiveness as a primary goal in order to survive and prosper. The role of local government has been transformed from the mere provision of basic public goods to the creation of conditions that nurture competitive businesses and vibrant communities.

But with the constant complaints of urban dwellers regarding traffic, pollution, crime, red tape and increasing costs of doing business, can Filipino cities truly compete in capturing the economic resources of a global market?

The Policy Center of the Asian Institute of Management has spent the last four years looking into the elements that could boost the competitive potentials of Philippine cities. This research has been boosted by its partnership with the International Institute of Management Development (IMD) of Switzerland in their annual study of the competitiveness of nations.

The competitiveness of a city is not based on a specific factor but an aggregate of numerous aspects that contribute to its overall ability to foster a dynamic business sector. The Policy Center's research results point that the cost of doing business, infrastructure, human resource, linkages, quality of life, local governance, and dynamism of local economy are the main factors that determine the level of attractiveness of urban centers for new residents or migrant businesses.

In August 2001, the Policy Center of the Asian Institute of Management, in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry and numerous academic institutions nationwide, launched the Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Project (PCCRP) 2002, the first of an annual measurement of the competitiveness of Filipino cities. This study analyzes 33 cities nationwide and ranks the different urban centers based on their economic competitiveness utilizing a methodology similar to that used by the IMD for ranking nations.

The impulse for conducting this national competitiveness benchmarking is to promote an environment from which our local governments may better learn from the successes and failures of other cities around us. For example, during its inception in the 1950s, Makati became a model for urban development as the first planned urban center in South Eeast Asia, attracting countless urban planners seeking to duplicate its success of transforming undeveloped grasslands into the country's financial and business center within two decades. However, unbridled growth in the years that followed has unfortunately saddled this well-planned city with deteriorating infrastructure, traffic congestion, pollution and urban blight, as in the rest of the National Capital Region. Currently, how does Makati still rate against the newer urban centers of the country such as Davao, Cebu and General Santos in its attractiveness for investment and long-term growth?

Manila during its heyday was filled with avenues such as Taft and United Nations with acacia-lined sidewalks that were cemented in the name of progress. It is only recently that the local governments of Manila, Makati and most especially Marikina, have taken steps to take back the sidewalks and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. How does the infrastructure of Manila and the rest of the NCR compare with those of Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro or Baguio?

Philippine cities must also look into the successes of foreign cities in promoting a competitive environment. Numerous lessons could be learned from the development of Osaka, Japan; Singapore and Curitiba, Brazil, especially regarding their local government initiatives, marketing projects and services provision that can be immediately implemented by local governments in the Philippines. In this light, the PCCRP study benchmarks the cities against world's best practices in order to ascertain the global competitiveness of each city.

The results of this benchmarking study will be revealed during the Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Forum, which will be held in April 10, 2002, Wednesday, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom, New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City. Secretary Manuel Roxas II, Dean Ernesto Garilao, Associate Dean for the Center for Development Management (CDM), and Professor Edel Guiza, CDM Local Governance, will be on hand to award the five most competitive cities of the Philippines.

For additional details on the Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Forum, please do not hesitate to contact Rosette Yupangco at the AIM Policy Center at 7501010 local 2111.

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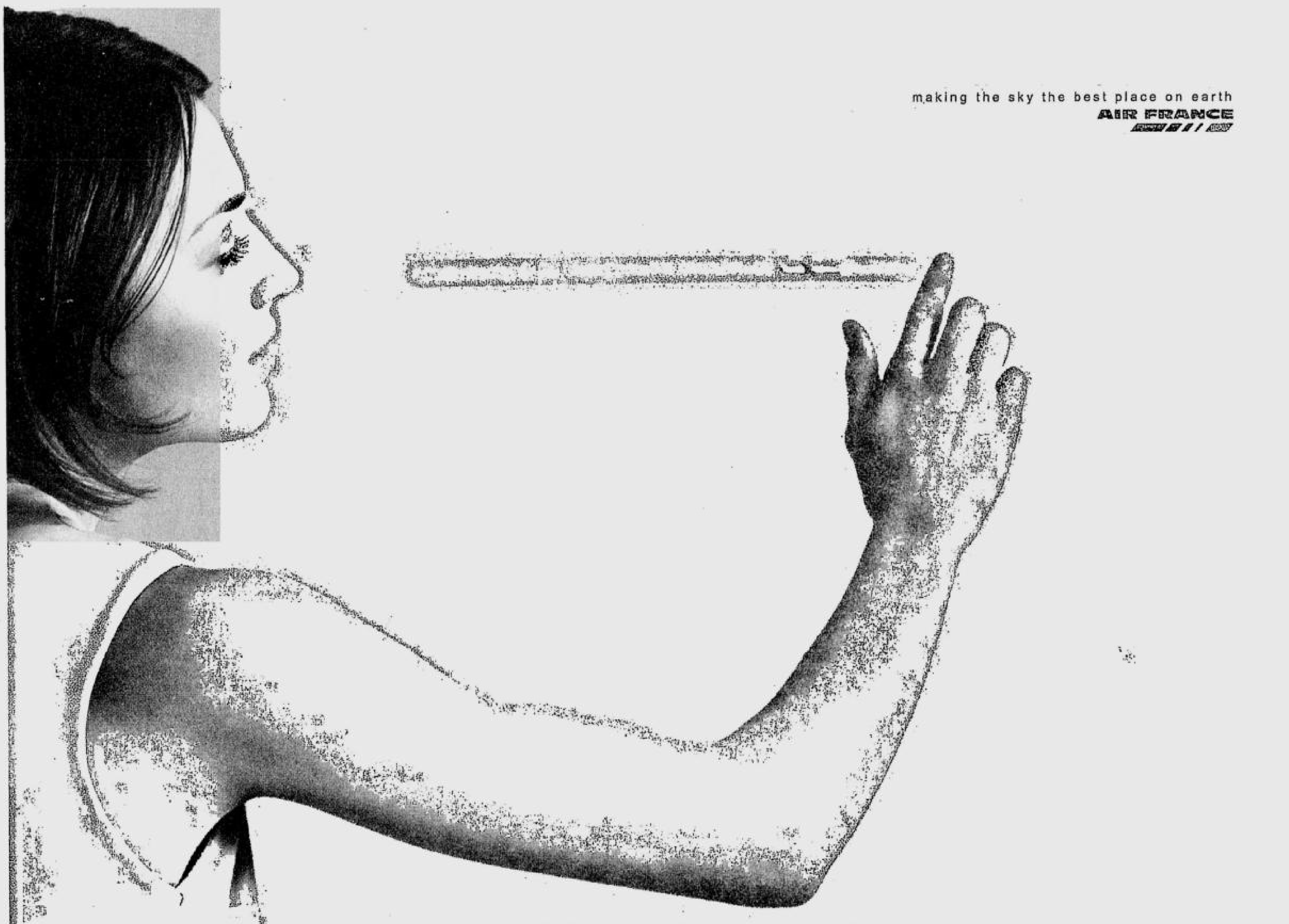

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US bank to expand into consumer banking

THE AMERICAN Exchange Bank Ltd. has been operating in the Philippines for more than 20 years but it has been limited to working with high net worth individuals and financial institutions that require international services.

Amex chief executive and president Richard Holmes, however, expressed greater faith in the Philippines as evidenced by plans to expand Amex bank's services to include consumer banking and cards.

"Over time we plan to get bigger here. We see a real opportunity in combining consumer banking such as taking deposits and asset management. We are now working on a strategy specific to the Philippines," Holmes explains.

Holmes came to the Philippines recently to take part in the cocktails given in honor of Vicente L. Chua, senior country executive of Amex bank who retired after more than 40 years with the company.

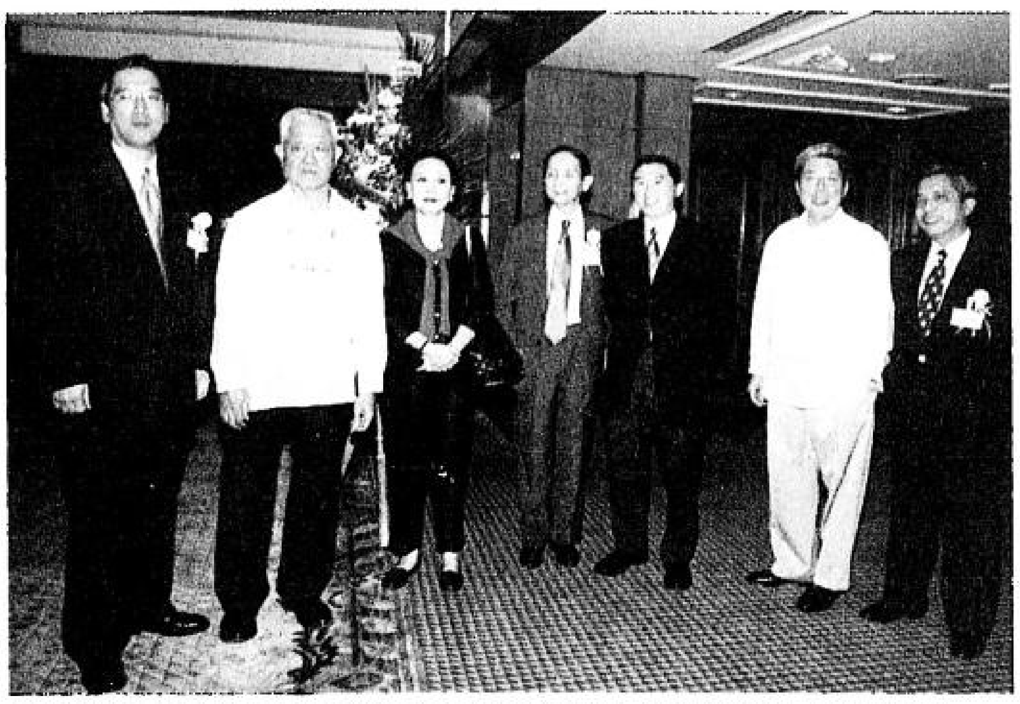
Holmes tells the INQUIRER that Amex Bank's plans are not affected by negative developments in Mindanao and slow economic recovery, saying that Amex operates in 42 countries and is used to these upheavals.

Holmes says he sees good potentials for Amex bank in the Philippines, and recovery will depend largely on the recovery of the United States.

There have been signs that the US is recovering faster than expected but it is still too early to tell, Holmes says.

In the meantime, Amex Bank is laying down the foundation for its expansion program.

"It is a journey that will take a couple of years but we should see some progress in two years," he says.



WELLINGTON Ong, Cesar EA Virata, Susanne Santos, Vicente Chua, Arthur Yap, Antonino Alindogan and Ronnie Alcantara.

FROM left: David Y. Wong, executive director and region head private banking North Asia, Susan Schofield, executive director FIG North Asia, Lachlan Hough, managing director and area head and Sergio Masvidal, managing director and global head, private banking.

DAVID Wong, executive director and regional head, private banking North Asia with INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto.

SERGIO J. Masvidal (left), managing director for Amex private banking, W. Richard Holmes (center), Amex president and Vicente L. Chua, senior director and senior country executive.

CONRADO Silva, Charlie Neligan, David Y. Wong, Susan Schofield, Lachlan Hough and Sergio J. Masvidal

RICHARD Holmes, Vicente L. Chua and Teresa R. Tan, director-FIG Manila OBU with AIG group head Jose L. Cuisia Jr. and Arthur Yap.

AMEX president Richard Holmes and Vicente L. Chua with guests Sim Chi Tat and Rosa Yu.

Foreigners

From page C1

47A2 for special non-immigrants visa holders are issued to those working in the export industries and have multiple exit-entry permits.

Most of these applicants in this C-2 to C-4 group have existing work permits, but must renew them either immediately or 15 days before its expiration. For elective positions, this must be done 30 days in advance. In case of new applications after formal appointment, with five days of such appointment notice.

All applicants will have to pay P1,000 on application and P3,000 upon approval.

Applicants under Form C-1 will receive their AEP for an unlimited period and no yearly renewal would be needed. Furthermore, this permit will be issued in their personal name, and could be used in employment in various companies or one company, multiple positions or one assigned post in a company. The only requirement is that every time they change your job or company, they would have to update the DOLE with that information.

All other applicants will have to pay the same as Form C-1 applicants, P4,000 for the first year. The difference is that this group of applicants would have to apply for renewal every year and pay P3,000 for each year thereon. This permit approval is good only for one company and one kind of assignment in that company. The only exemption is that if the companies have various branches or sister companies, then it would be okay to also work there. It will be issued in the name of the company, who might apply for it.

(The author is a Filipino citizen of Indian origin, and the vice president of the Filipino Indian Chamber of Commerce.)

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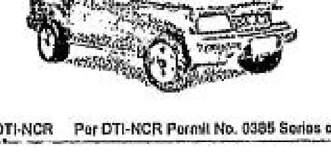

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Low-cost consultants now open to SMEs

GLOBALIZATION comes with benefits and disadvantages. It forces companies to become more efficient and innovative. It also results in market expansion and more employment

But to most Philippine enterprises, the disadvantages come faster and more abrupt. Fierce competitions, mergers, closures, displacement of workers, environmental problems are some of the heavy costs of globalization.

To survive and prosper in the future, companies must change and rethink the way they do business. Large and multinational companies address this concern by engaging the services of topnotch local and international consulting firms that provide them professional advice to keep their businesses in step with competition here and abroad.

The prevailing market rate for consulting work is conservatively estimated at P100,000 to more than P1 million, depending on the services required.

Big organizations would earmark funds for this kind of service if it would ensure operations improvement and survival of their businesses.

But how about small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which comprise 99 percent of establishments nationwide, wanting improvement and survival of their businesses but cannot afford to commission the services of consulting firms?

Will they just close shop and succumb to the adverse effects of globalization?

Istive-PAP

Since 1998, the National Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) of the Department of Labor and Employment is continuously extending free technical and consulting assistance to SMEs in all regions of the country through its Istiv Productivity Awareness Program (Istiv-PAP).

Through the productivity technology, the program aims to instill a culture of positive change in the behavior of people to enhance the competitiveness and productivity performance of small and medium-sized businesses.

The Istiv-PAP is primarily a values-driven human resource strategy for productivity and quality improvement that is rooted on the five ideal attributes of a productive individual. I stands for industrious, S for systematic, T for time-conscious, I for innovative and V for strong value for work

These attributes are found in many quality and productivity improvement programs. Istiv, however, is more than a program or a technique. It is a management concept that recognizes the value of human resource in bringing about the needed changes to improve quality of goods and services and the productivity of business enterprises. While quality and productivity programs and techniques focus on ways of doing things, Istiv focuses on people.

More than 900 beneficiaries

Within a span of three years, the NWPC was able to install the Istiv productivity technology in more than 900 SMEs all over the country in the manufacturing, service, export, and agribusiness sectors, benefiting almost 17,000 company owners, managers, supervisors, and workers.

In terms of return on investment, it is estimated that the improvement projects installed by beneficiary-firms through the Istiv-PAP resulted in either savings or additional profit of P200,000 annually on the average per SME.

This estimate was based on the successful cases reported by the Istiv trainers and facilitators nationwide.

The program implementation in beneficiary-firms also reveals significant improvements in workers' participation in decision-making, implementation of skills enhancement programs and introduction .of reward schemes commensurate to improved performance of employees.

To encourage other small and medium businesses to also develop and implement quality and productivity improvement projects or programs in their own companies, the NWPC held the first Istiv National Convention in November 2001.

Selected Istiv beneficiary-firms from different parts of the country showcased their success stories in the presence of other quality and productivity practitioners.

Program components

The Istiv-PAP is implemented nationwide through an integrated media plan, training and consultancy plan, and impact evaluation component. These are the strategies that make the Istiv program unique and different from the other quality and productivity training and consultancy programs.

On the other hand, the training and consultancy plan aims to provide technical assistance and firm level intervention to SMEs.

Under this component, Istiv trainers and facilitators undertake the installation of the Istiv productivity technology in beneficiary-firms through the following training and consultancy package:

- **Management orientation course on quality, productivity and Istiv**—a half-day program that intends to provide top management and decision-makers fundamental knowledge about quality, productivity, and Istiv and use this knowledge to set actual productivity improvement targets for their respective companies.
- **Istiv integrated productivity course for supervisors and managers—**a three-day skills-upgrading workshop that supervisors need in setting up their own Istiv improvement programs based on the targets set by the company owners.
- **Istiv orientation course for workers**—a one-day training that aims to provide non-supervisory and shop floor workers knowledge on how Istiv can help improve individual and team productivity and identify areas for productivity improvement.
- **Quality and productivity improvement project implementation**—a five-day firm level intervention to assist the firms in the actual implementation of quality and productivity improvement projects.

A pool of more than 50 Istiv trainers and facilitators from the NWPC and the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Boards, grouped into five self-managed work teams, implement the Istiv program in their respective assigned areas.

ISTIV facilitators providing consulting services and technical assistance at Anjo Farms Inc. (boneless bangus processing) in San Fabian, Pangasinan.

Istiv for agribusiness

Last year, the Istiv program was expanded to cover the agribusiness sector, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture.

To implement the program, 15 Istiv agribusiness facilitators went through intensive workshops in Manila, La Union, and Pangasinan that prepared them to provide consulting services to agribusiness firms, as well as other business enterprises.

Another 15 Istiv trainers are scheduled to undergo the same training in May 2002 in Lipa City that will benefit at least three agribusiness-SMEs as pilot beneficiary-firms.

The Istiv agribusiness training and consultancy program was successfully pilot tested in the following firms: Anjo Farms Inc. in San Fabian, Pangasinan, engaged in fish processing; and Bolong Agri-Management Corp. (Bamcor) in San Juan, La Union, producing animal feeds for B-Meg of San Miguel Food Inc.

The main thrust of the program is to advance productivity as the appropriate tool to achieve profitability, worker and machine efficiency, and ultimately ensure the viability of small and medium enterprises.

The productivity improvement program designed for the two pilot firms aimed for at least 10 percent improvement in productivity and ultimately, profitability.

Through the technical assistance provided by Istiv agribusiness facilitators, Anjo Farms Inc. was able to achieve the following improvement:

- Improved management control system.
- Increased level of production volumes of processed bangus by 33 percent per day.
- Estimated annual savings of more than P100,000 as a result of improved level of production volumes.
- The annual profit margin has already reached more than 40 percent of the projected annual profitability gain (as of November 2001).

LOW-COST/ C7

ISTIV facilitators conducting monitoring and evaluation of productivity improvement project at Bamcor feedmill in San Juan, La Union.

Beaten down technology stocks show signs of life

NEW YORK—There are signs of life for telecommunication and computer-related stocks.

Savaged as the technology bubble burst, investors have been reading forecasts that they face years of doom and gloom for the names that comprise the Nasdaq Composite .IXIC and other tech-laden indexes.

But now some money managers and analysts are cautiously optimistic about increased spending in selected technology sectors, which should boost profits and send at least some tech stock prices higher.

A huge glut in the amount of fiber optic cable network capacity and equipment has been one of the biggest worries. But some say that the established equipment companies in particular may benefit because billions of dollars of network capacity is simply being shut off.

The survivors, soon, might need to boost spending to revitalize their own networks.

"It's hard to get figures but inventories are being drawn down to where things have stabilized," said Dan Chung, chief investment officer, with Fred Alger Management Inc. which oversees $13.6 billion.

Chung points to anecdotal evidence that the outlook is improving for technology, including last month's complaints by Apple Computer Inc. that prices of some components, such as memory and flat panel displays, were increasing. If parts were prevalent, prices would not be rising.

Sanford Bernstein analyst Paul Sagawa told clients recently that although capital expenditure by North American telephone carriers is still likely to be down year over year in 2002, he believes spending bottomed out in the first quarter and is likely to improve significantly in the second half of this year.

Alternative telephone carriers to the large established companies are failing and will be forced to decommission networks or liquidate assets, Sagawa told clients. For a variety of reasons, the established telecom carriers probably won't buy those assets. Instead, they will increase their own existing capacity as congestion on their data networks increases.

Telecom equipment

A search of recent headlines bears out Sagawa's view.

Start-up telecommunications companies were particularly hard hit by slowing demand for services and the market is littered with bankrupt carriers such as Teligent Inc., 360networks Inc., Viatel Inc., Winstar Communications Inc., and PSINet Inc. Fiber-optic company Aldelphia Business Solutions Inc. filed for bankruptcy last month.

Despite the bankruptcies, there are hopeful signs that the telecom industry is once again expanding its infrastructure in anticipation of an upturn. Spending on wireless equipment will be particularly strong, Sagawa said in a client note.

"Most wireless carriers have committed to major technology upgrades in 2002 to enable wireless data services," Sagawa said, noting those same carriers already face significant congestion and service quality deterioration in the face of double-digit traffic growth.

Sagawa's best sector play is Lucent Technologies Inc., down 94 percent from its record close in December 1999, as its clients have "strong spending plans, free cash flow, and liquidity." Rival Nortel Networks, down 95 percent from its closing high, may take longer to return to growth, Sagawa said, as it has greater exposure to alternative carriers.

Glut a myth?

Some analysts have even argued against the widespread belief that there is too much fiber optic cable in the ground.

"There is no widespread 'bandwidth glut' in the US telecom industry," according to a report from TeleChoice, a Tulsa Oklahoma-based research and consulting firm.

"As we look at it, somewhere above 70 percent of fiber (optic cable) has not been lit (put to work) and that's supposed to last 10 to 20 years," Russ McGuire, chief strategy officer at TeleChoice, told Reuters.

But TeleChoice looked at several scenarios and estimated that even if business demand for bandwidth stays at a historically modest 20 percent increase in the next five years and the number of homes with Internet access rise a bit, "we could run out of fiber (capacity), in three to four years,"

BEATEN/ C7

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Per DTI-NCR Permit # 1160 Series of 2002

People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Palanca accepting entries, novel category open

THE PALANCA Foundation is now accepting entries to its 52nd Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature.

The highlight of this year's Palanca Awards is the Novel Category in English and Filipino, offered only every three years. Entries to this category can cover any theme and should depict the Filipino way of life, culture or aspirations. There is no limit as to the number of pages for the entries in the Novel category.

Other categories open in English and Filipino are: full-length play, poetry, essay, one-act play, short story for children, short story and futuristic fiction. The teleplay and screenplay categories are only open in the Filipino division. In addition to English and Filipino, the short story category is also open to Hiligaynon, Iloko, and Cebuano.

A special category, the Kabataan Informal Essay, which is open to all high school students aged 18 years and below. This year's theme is "World Peace In My Own Little Way" for the English division and "Kapayapaang Pandaigdig sa Aking Munting Pamamaraan" for the Filipino division.

Entries to the Kabataán Informal Essay must carry an original title and should be accompanied by a letter from the high school principal certifying that the participant is a bona fide high school student of the school at the time of the contest deadline and that the entry is the author's original work.

All entries must be submitted on or before April 30. Entries sent by mail should be postmarked not later than April 15. Entries submitted via e-mail should be in RTF (rich text format) or a Word Document File and should be sent as an attachment together with the author's biodata and the original copy of the notarized authorization form. The original copy of the notarized authorization form should then be sent to the Palanca Foundation Inc. through mail. Entries submitted via e-mail should be transmitted not later than midnight of April 30.

For inquiries, call 818-3681 to 85 locals 31 and 24, or e-mail cpawards@info.com.ph. Contest rules and forms are available at the Carlos Palanca Foundation Inc., ground floor, 105 CPJ Building, Carlos Palanca Street, Legazpi Village, Makati City, 1229.

MALAMPAYA WINS GRAND ANVIL

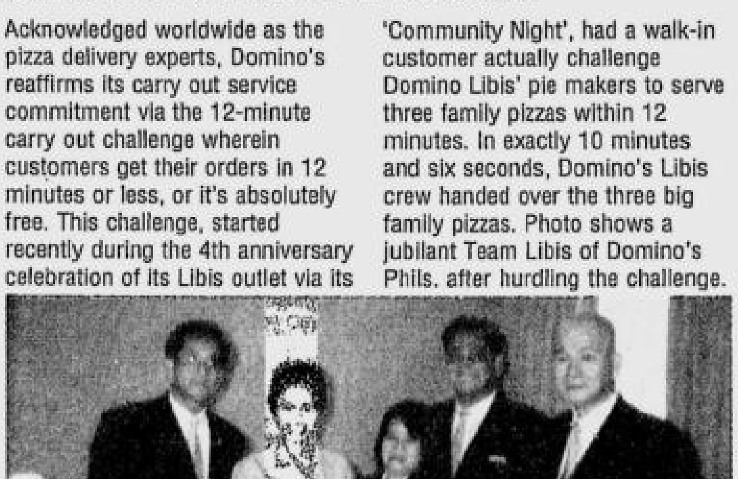
Shell Philippines Exploration B.V. (Spex) is the 2001 Grand Anvil Award winner for its Malampaya Deep Water Gas to Power Project. Shown is external relations manager Ding S. Roco (third from right) holding the Grand Anvil Award trophy on behalf of Spex and the multi-functional Malampaya Team, which he said 'truly reflected the Spex team achievement.' With him are (from left) Ed Alcaraz, chair of the 37th Anvil Awards committee, Jenny Singson, Spex external relations, and Anvil Awards board of judges members lawyer Ricardo V. Puno, Jr., and columnist Jarius Bondoc, Karen Agabin, Spex external relations, and Gen. Honesto Isleta, president of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines. Spex entry was titled 'Malampaya—Birth of the Natural Gas Industry in the Philippines. It described the external affairs plans for the inauguration of the project. A separate Anvil Award of Excellence was also given to Spex for its institutional and corporate PR program in the Corporate Image category.

PETRON'S ANVILS

Petron Corp. received the most number of recognitions, including being the first recipient of the Bronze Anvil, the highest award for outstanding public relations tool, at the recently concluded 37th Anvil Awards Night of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines. The Bronze Anvil was awarded to ArtPetron Collaterals used in the country's first-ever National Student Art Competition hosted by Petron Corp. Aside from this, Petron received six Awards of Excellence, including three more awards for ArtPetron. Shown are the trophies held by Petron executives from left Felimon Antiporta, retail sales director; Walter Tan, VP-marketing; Malu Erni, executive director of Petron Foundation; Charmaine Canillas, advertising manager; Nicasio Alcantara, chair; Robert Luz, market planning research and advertising manager; Enrico Jereza, industrial trade manager, and Antonio Pelayo, OIC-VP for finance and HR.

DOMINO'S 12-MINUTE CHALLENGE

Acknowledged worldwide as the pizza delivery experts, Domino's reaffirms its carry out service commitment via the 12-minute carry out challenge wherein customers get their orders in 12 minutes or less, or it's absolutely free. This challenge, started recently during the 4th anniversary celebration of its Libis outlet via its 'Community Night', had a walk-in customer actually challenge Domino Libis' pie makers to serve three family pizzas within 12 minutes. In exactly 10 minutes and six seconds, Domino's Libis crew handed over the three big family pizzas. Photo shows a jubilant Team Libis of Domino's Phils. after hurdling the challenge.



NETWORLD'S HONESTY AWARD

Networld Hotel made an on-the-spot award and recognition to Liza Hilario (second from left), on of its housekeeping associates. Liza surrendered a substantial amount of cash inadvertently left behind in a guestroom she was cleaning. Acts of honesty and integrity are highlighted in pursuit of the company's core values: service, honesty, accountability, respect and proactivity. Shown with Liza are (from left) Andy Benwick, Networld Hotel's general manager, Chona Aloria, senior housekeeper and laundry manager, Olie Hubalde, human resources officer, and Masanori Yamada, resident manager. Networld Hotel caters to both business and leisure travelers with its 89 well-appointed guestrooms and banquet facilities.

The bra that's cool inside and out

SUMMER COMES with perfect sunny skies and cool gimmicks. It's the season for T-shirts and sunglasses, and the hottest new product in town—Wacoal's Air Cool Bra:

This innovative product from Japan's leading brand of women's undergarment provides a cooling effect under the bust area, the part of the female body that perspires the most next only to the armpits. A mesh-like material on the edge of the bra lets the air pass freely from the bust line to the top of the breast, eliminating perspiration and keeping the bust cool even when the temperature rises.

Its perfect shape creates a smooth silhouette and natural curves when worn under a T-shirt.

Like all Wacoal undergarments, the Air Cool bra is a product of extensive research that starts at the company's Human Science Center in Japan. From the choice of materials that are most appropriate to a particular function to computer-aided design that ensures perfect fit, the Air Cool bra was developed through a rigorous process that guarantees customer satisfaction. So it's cool on the inside, and cool on the outside.

The Air Cool Bra is another showcase of Wacoal's innovative approach to products. The use of the mesh-like material on the edge of the bra is a unique innovation that gives the product its outstanding benefit of a cooling effect on the bust.

Wacoal Air Cool bra is now available in leading retail outlets and department stores in the Philippines.

Cooking the way mom cooks

Women nowadays have become more sophisticated, more independent and are going up the corporate ladder. But while women are conquering new fields, they have started to become less skilled in the place where they have dominated traditionally – the kitchen.

In a rush, today's women have become increasingly dependent on packaged foods in order to cope with their active lifestyles. Soups are prepared by mixing hot water with a sachet of instant mix. Sauces and gravies for viands are prepared the same way. Cakes and pastries are bought rather than baked.

The lack of practice in the kitchen and the dependence on all things "instant" leaves little room to wonder why the food they prepare are no match for mom's "home-cooked" meals. Almost half of today's women, according to a study, say they can't cook as well as their mothers.

While mom's cooking is always remembered with fondness, it sometimes can lead to frustration especially when mom's cooking becomes the benchmark for your own. It can get more frustrating once you remember mom dishing out trays upon trays of culinary delights when you can barely master a single dish.

Cream All-Purpose Flour and Cream Cornstarch are two must-have in mom's kitchen shelf that wants to bridge the cooking gap between generation and rescue today's modern but cooking-challenged woman.

Through the Cream Cooking websitE (http://www.creamcooking.com), today's modern woman can now discover why it was so easy for mom to create those heavenly meals. Browse through the easy-to-follow recipes that make use of Cream All-Purpose Flour and Cream Cornstarch and learn how to concoct thick and creamy soups, mix sauces and gravies or bake mouthwatering cakes and pastries. The recipes are so easy, it's perfect for women who don't know but want to learn how to cook.

The site also teaches you mom's secrets for keeping the house spick-and-span. Household tips like grease spot removal, stain removal, glass cleaning, carpet cleaning and tidying up dirty stuffed toys and fabric dolls through the use of cornstarch are enumerated in the website

And if all these "unfolded secrets" are not enough, the website also shows how cornstarch can aid skin care. Tips on sunburn relief, skin irritation, chafing, facial care and baby care, all through the use of cornstarch, are disclosed for everyone to browse.

Cream All-Purpose Flour and Cream Cornstarch have helped generations of mothers with these recipes, secrets and tips. It's time for women of today to discover all these by simply clicking the mouse and training your Internet browsers to http://www.creamcooking.com.

Product FILES

'Active Smart' Fisher & Paykel

ACTIVE Smart not only cares for your food in new ways, safely maintaining freshness and flavor for longer, it is also built to handle the rigors of daily use.

Whether you're grabbing a snack on the run or entertaining a crowd, Active Smart opens the door to a world of possibilities.

Fisher & Paykel refrigerators take less than three hours to cool food to safe temperatures—most competitor models take four or more. Food is also frozen to -18 degrees C quicker in a Fisher & Paykel Active Smart refrigerator/freezer. This ensures that the food is safer and retains its quality when thawed.

To keep fresh, fruit and vegetables require high humidity and low temperatures to slow down their rate of respiration. The unique design of the Fisher & Paykel humidity control lid (HCL) provides this ideal environment.

Fruit and vegetables will stay crisp and fresh longer in your Active Smart refrigerator, lasting up to two weeks or more. This means you will waste less food, not only saving you money but also reducing the need to shop as often. Most other models will keep fruit and veggies fresh for no more than three days.

WATER SERVICE AGREEMENT

Balibago Waterworks System (BWS) president Cristino I. Panlilio (second from right) signs the memorandum of agreement with former Bamban, Tarlac town mayor Florante Cojuangco (second from left) for the supply of the town residents with potable water. The water firm will also construct and operate several deep wells to supply the whole area. Also shown are BWS general manager Allam Kahil (left) and BWS analyst Mark Soriano (right). With the accord, the town residents can now sign up for water service connection at the BWS office at the Bamban town hall.

COOKING FOR ROMANTICS

The San Miguel Culinary Center celebrated Valentine's Day with a cooking demonstration titled 'An Intimate Dinner for Two' at the SM Megamall. Maricel Manalo (right) is assisted by Manuel Parba demonstrating special but easy-to-prepare recipes.

NIPPON LIFE'S 1ST Q SALES RALLY

Nippon Life Philippines, the local subsidiary of the world's largest life insurer Nippon Life Insurance Company of Japan, held its first quarter sales rally at the Carlos P. Romulo auditorium of RCBC Plaza recently. Shown are the 2001 MDRT qualifiers and company officers, from left, Eddie Agbayani, VP for marketing; Theresa Musni of Ortigas; John Jimenez of Legaspi; Nenita Alano of Salcedo; Medileen Herrera of Salcedo; Dorothy Ong of Banawe; Roanne Raymundo of Ortigas; Jaydee Ong of Cebu; and Kazuya Endo, SVP for marketing. At the center is Nippon Life president and CEO Shigeru Noma.

BITS Clips

Kids Kitchen camp

THE SAN Miguel Culinary Center will be conducting hands-on cooking classes for kids 8 to 12 years old. This is a kitchen survival course for young children who will learn the basics of cooking and baking and how to tackle recipes in the kitchen. This would also familiarize them with cooking terms and how-tos in using kitchen gadgets and equipment. This will be held at the San Miguel Culinary Center at Eagle corner Legazpi Street, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City. A fee of P1,000 for the three-day classes includes recipe handouts, apron, food tastings and a loot bag. This will be held in four batches: batch 1 on April 8, 10 and 12; batch 2 on April 15, 17 and 19; batch 3 on April 22, 25 and 26, and batch 4 on April 29, May 2 and 3. For inquiries, call 671-9876 to 91 local 402, 404 and 405, or visit www.sanmiguelculinary.com for more details.

MMPI opening salvo

LEADING publishing group Mega Magazines and Publications Inc, the publisher of Mega, Meg, FWD, Family Reader, BluPrint, and My Home, is now on its 10th year in the industry. MMPI strengthened its commitment to being the premier purveyor of style by opening the year with a series of trailblazing activities. Meg, with big brother guy magazine FWD is searching for 10 girls and 10 guys for the Circle of 20 series of modeling workshops. This is open to model wannabes 13-22 years old. Deadline for application is April 12 for the first two batches and May 10 for the last two batches. Log on to www.ivegotstyle.net for details, or call Maia Manalaysay at 631-2859 for details.

Filipino cardiologist at global meets

DR. ADOLFO B. Bellosillo, president of the 7th World Congress of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Secondary Prevention, and president of the Foundation of Lay Education on Heart Diseases Inc., has been invited to several world heart meetings as plenary speaker. From April 10 to 13, Bellosillo will talk on "Hemorrheology and Exercise" and "Public Education in Preventive Cardiology: Implementation in a Developing Country" during the Joint International Meeting of the Egyptian Society of Atherosclerosis and the Heart Friends Around the World, and the World Health Organization Workshop on Secondary Prevention of Mycardial Infarction and Stroke to be held in Cairo, Egypt. He will also be in Slovakia from April 25 to 27, in Moscow, Russia from June 18 to 21, and in Beijing China from Sept. 14 to 17 to speak on heart-related issues.

CHRDF seminars in Baguio

THE CENTER for Human Research and Development Foundation Inc. will conduct seminar workshops on Instructional Materials Writing for textbooks, journals and modules and on Low Cost Technology on High Value Crops. These will be held on April 10 and 11 at Akap International, 126 A-1, second road, Quezon Hill, Baguio City. Meanwhile, the Professional Librarians' Review Center also invites all professional and non-professional library and information personnel who are assigned in the technical service section of the different types of libraries in both private and public sectors to the seminar on Abstracting and Indexing Made Easy: A Modular Approach. The seminar will be on April 12 and 13 in the same venue. For inquiries, call Beth Solquio of 27 Masikap Street, Barangay Pinyahan, Sikatuna Village, Quezon City at 927-9858 or 435-5727. Participants for Abstracting and Indexing can also call Nena Ligligan, the Baguio secretariat at 443-4769.

Taipan turns friendly to the environment

THE SM group of companies and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources recently formalized their environmental protection partnership through a memorandum of undertaking signed recently at the SM Megamall.

DENR Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez and SM Group senior vice president Hans T. Sy signed the MOU in a simple program hosted by broadcast journalist Cathy Santillan and DENR EMB-NCR regional director Sixto Tolentino Jr.

During his speech, Alvarez cited SM for not only building malls, but also helping bring about a cleaner world. Sy, on the other hand, assured the secretary of SM's commitment toward environmental protection as "we are doing this for the future."

The MOU highlights the partnership of the government and business sectors to work together for a cause.

For many years, SM and the DENR have been working together to help bring about environmental protection through three programs: the building of wastewater treatment plants and the implementation of garbage segregation in all malls, as well the awareness campaign to reuse the SM shopping bag at all the SM Department Stores.

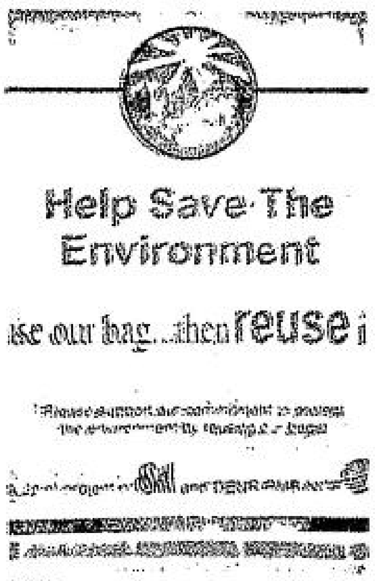
Other highlights of the program included the presentation of the new SM shopping bag with reuse reminders to Secretary Alvarez by SM Department Store SVP for operations Jorge Mendiola; the awarding of a plaque to SM for its environmental protection efforts by the secretary.

EMB-NCR regional director Sixto Tolentino, Jr.

With its wastewater treatment plants, garbage segregation and shopping bag reuse programs, SM works very closely with DENR to help protect the environment.

Environmental Protection
Partner Through The Years

DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez and the SM Group's senior vice president Hans Sy during the Memorandum of Undertaking signing. Behind them are (from left) Corazon Davis, SM's senior SVP for operations Jorge Mendiola, EMB-NCR's Sixto Tolentino and SM's engineer Rene Manaloto



THIS poster encourages the reuse of SM bags and can be found at all SM Department Stores.

Low-cost . . .

From page C5

- Human resource-related improvements that include creation of a committee (headed by the plant supervisor) where workers are encouraged to participate in problem solving; and establishment of a canteen and rest area inside the plant where workers spend their breaks

Jet Tanjangco, Anjo Farms Inc. operations manager, expressed satisfaction and appreciation to NWPC for choosing their firm as a beneficiary of the Istiv program.

He cited a number of very tangible improvements in his operations that have systematized their work and enabled him, his supervisor, and his workers to work more effectively and, thus, even exceed their own expectations from the project.

Tanjangco strongly endorses the idea of propagating the program to benefit other small and medium companies. In fact, last year, he already presented and shared their success story in a gathering of productivity practitioners in La Union.

Bamcor likewise made great strides in its operations and financial aspects as a result of the productivity improvement program implementation. The following improvement were attained:

- Significant decrease in fuel and electricity consumption through better production planning.
- Improved operations processing through use of various production forms that provided timely information for use in decision-making and planning.
- Increased revenues by 13.62 percent given the 10.2 percent increase in production volume per month.
- Introduction of a reward scheme where workers are given cash incentives for outputs produced over the agreed quota and other performance-based bonuses.

Like Anjo Farms Inc., Bamcor's owners were very grateful and appreciative of the Istiv improvement technology that is installed in their organization.

Daniel Bolong Sr., Bamcor president, in fact said he would recommend the program highly to the Provincial Development Council of which he is a respected member.

How to be a Istiv beneficiary-firm?

Companies that are interested to be Istiv beneficiary-firms may contact the training and consultancy services division of the NWPC at Tel. Nos. 5278011 to 17 or the RTWPB offices in their respective localities. Applications can also be made through the Internet at www.nwpc.dole.gov.ph.

Beaten down technology stocks show signs of life

From page C5

said McGuire, particularly as new applications take hold.

Merrill Lynch analyst John Ray is bullish on the storage networking sector, companies that operate storage systems for network computing. While spending on information technology continues to be weak, "we are seeing signs of a pick-up in March," he told clients.

His picks include Brocade Communications Systems Inc. and Network Appliance Inc.

"There is evidence that Information Technology spenders are dipping their toes in the water," Roy told Reuters. "They won't go the whole hog and buy high end, but will buy mid-level products."

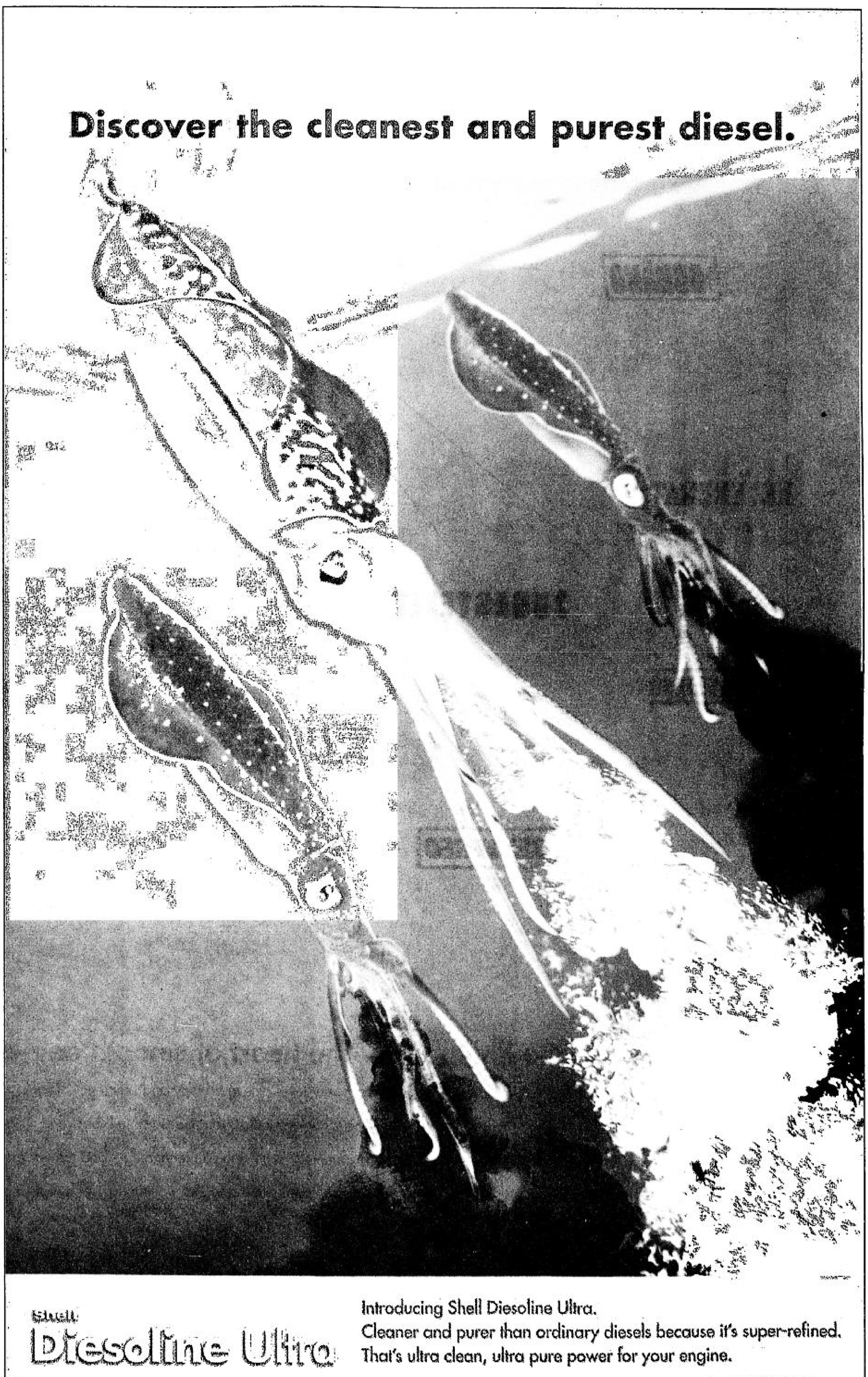
It won't be all smooth sailing, however.

And even if the demand outlook improves, few investors are willing to predict technology stocks and the benchmark indexes will climb back to their old highs any time soon.

"We had a bubble (in technology stocks) where valuations got up to very high levels and earnings may have been stretched making comparisons tough" going forward, said Joe Stocke, portfolio manager with Malvern, Pennsylvania-based StoneRidge Investment Partners LLC. which oversees $1 billion in assets.

Even compounding at a 12 percent return will mean it will take a decade for the Nasdaq Composite to return to its old high, Stocke said.

Reuters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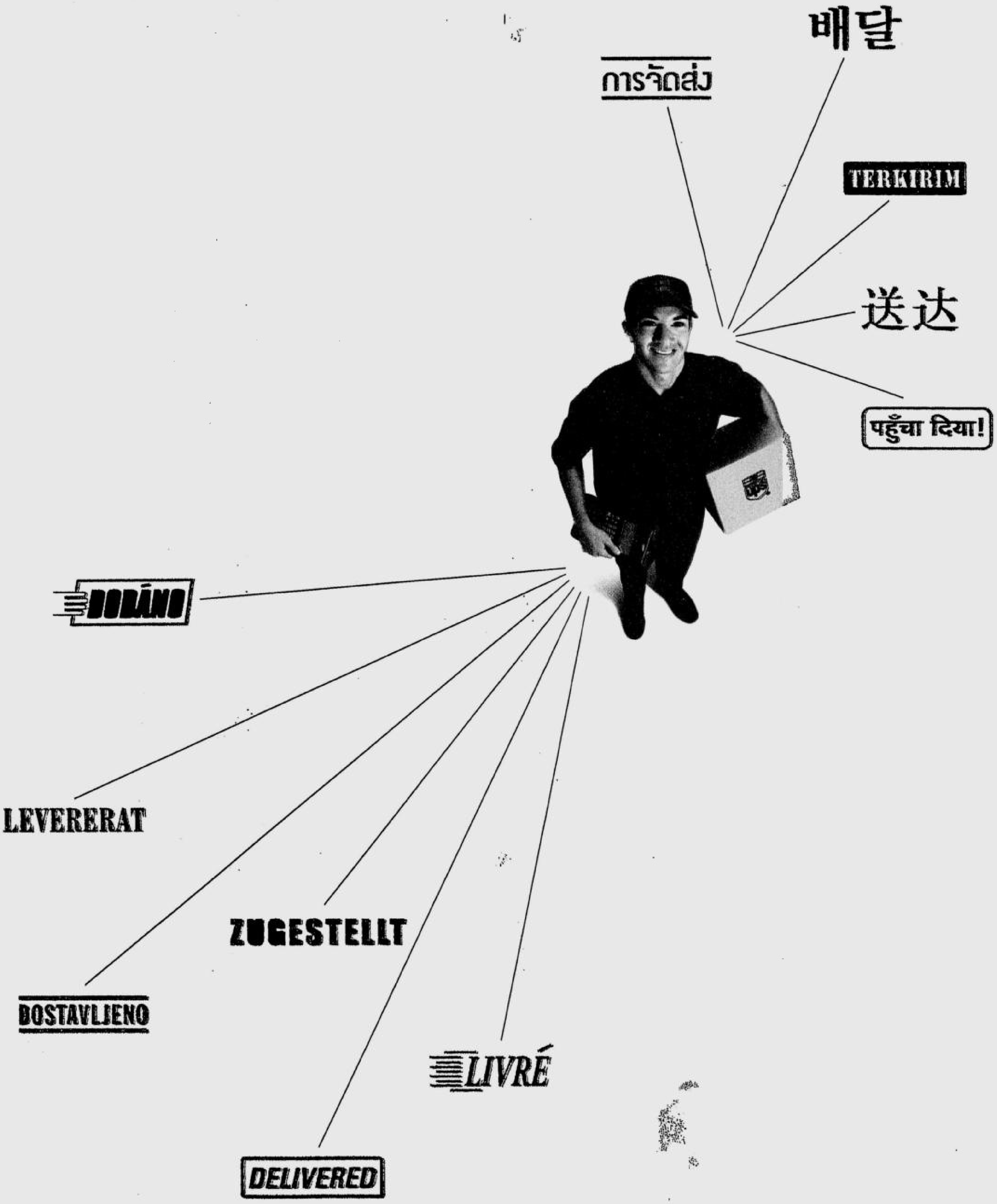

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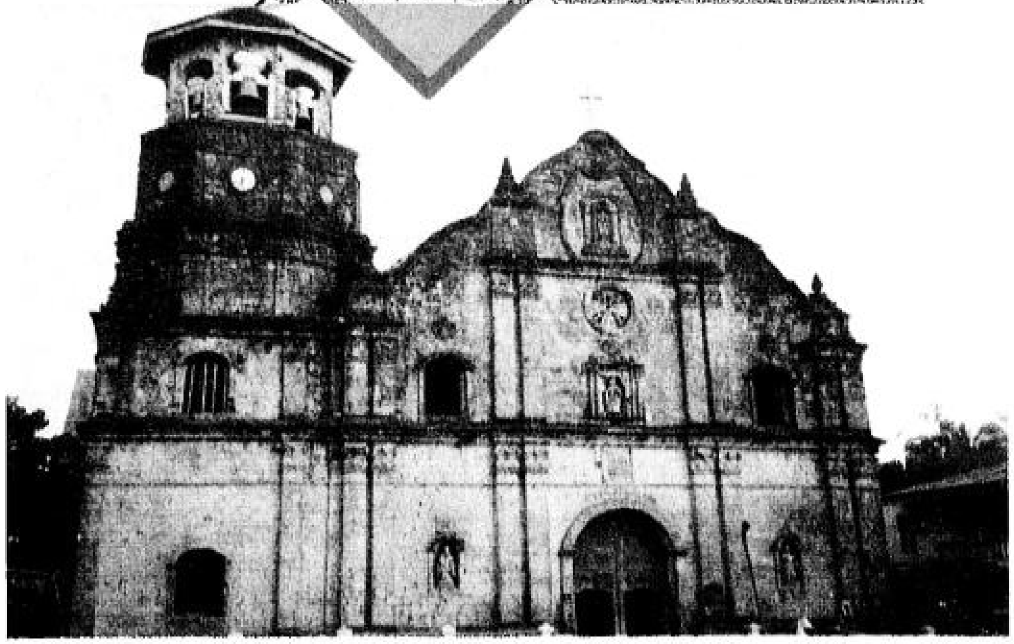
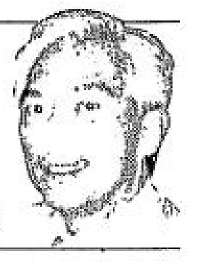


A BAD restoration job on the belfry of Sta. Monica Church in Panay, Capiz mars the elegance of the simple architecture of the structure's facade.

Restoring Panay Church in Capiz begins in earnest



SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

PARISHIONERS all over the country feel that caring for their church is a key duty. But when parishioners like those of Panay in Capiz make a loud call to their kith and kin, including those who have left for far-flung greener pastures, to join hands to restore their church to its old grandeur, that means they are taking their duty very seriously indeed.

Sta. Monica Church in Panay, Capiz is a church that should be taken seriously. It is a majestic structure, one of the 26 Spanish colonial churches in the Philippines that the National Museum had elevated as National Treasures last year. In 1997 the National Historical Institute had declared it a National Historical Landmark.

The town of Panay was the second Spanish settlement established in the Philippines when Legazpi set up his headquarters there in 1569 after leaving Cebu. The town itself was founded, as Augustinian Fr. Pedro Galende writes ("Angels in Stone," 1987), in 1572 under the patronage of Sta. Monica, although other sources date the founding to 1581. During its term as the provincial capital for two centuries, the town prospered. It became a renowned textile center that wove cloth that was exported to Europe and the site of large rum and wine distilleries.

Originally constructed around 1692, Sta. Monica was not spared of the seasonal natural disasters that plagued the Philippines. After its original construction around 1692, it sustained heavy typhoon damage in 1774 and 1884. Another typhoon in 1874 ripped off the roof. The transept was lost to another typhoon in 1875 after which the parish priest, Fr. Lesmes Pérez, repaired the church. The destroyed convent was never rebuilt.

Sandstone

According to Galende: "The church, a big structure made of sandstone, measures 70 meters long and 25 meters wide by 18 meters high. The walls are 3 meters thick; the floor is covered with marble. Its structure is shaped in the form of a Latin cross with one large central altar and four lateral ones, each equipped with gorgeously decorated and gilded *retablos* of hardwood, decorated with various polychromed statues." Later additions to its sumptuous baroque interior are silver frontals for

RESTORING/ p.D3

BIGGEST BELL in ASIA
Sta. MONICA CHURCH
Panay, Capiz Philippines

SAID to be the biggest in the country, the bell was cast in the 19th century out of 70 sacks of coins donated by parishioners.

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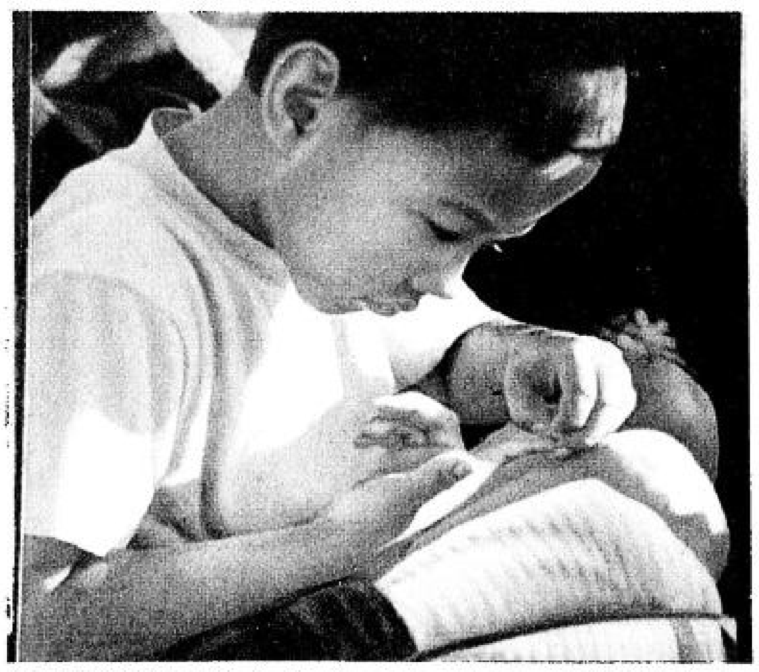
'Guhit' brings outdoors into Baguio Country Club

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo with (from left) Angelo Baldemor, Joven Ignacio, Araceli Limcaco Dans, Aladin Antiqueño, Tito Sanchez, Azor Pazcoguin, Lucy Vergara Fernando, Sr. Esther Ma. Cuvin, Felipe Mayoya, Telly Agcaoili and Baguio Country Club president Rico Agcaoili



"SALUBSOB" by Aladin Antiqueño

ONE gets the feeling that the great outdoors—flora, fauna, boys at play and a random bronze sculpted golfer—had come rushing into the Baguio Country Club exhibition hall to nestle among Araceli Limcaco Dans' exquisite *callado* oil paintings.

Rendered for the most part in the realist style, "Guhit," the exhibit of 63 paintings, sculptures and bas-reliefs by eight artists, was opened by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Holy Thursday.

The idea of a show at the Baguio Country Club was born when its president, Federico Agcaoili, and his wife Telly, visited Dans' home last year to find a gaggle of artists painting away.

The planning and effort to transport the outstanding works of art to the Cordilleras, many of them large and heavy pieces, can only be described as mammoth. Joven Ignacio, from whose brush have flowed exotic birds preening in the bush, is a United Kingdom-trained architect. The job of setting up the show fell principally on him, bringing to bear both his painterly and architectural skills to mount each piece to greatest visual advantage.

A true son of Paete, known for its intricate woodcarving, Angelo Baldemor presents three-dimensional works that combine sculpture with painting to produce striking high-relief woodcarvings of brilliantly painted fruits and plants, boiled peanuts spilling out of a *sombrero,* and other such pleasant surprises. His older brother, Manuel, the noted painter, was his first art teacher.

Aladin Antiqueño, a longtime student of Ibarra de la Rosa, specializes in sensitive and poignant renditions of children. Far from his origins as a carpenter's son, he has won major prizes in art competitions. Even while still in high school in Imus, Cavite, commissioned charcoal portraits of teachers and classmates led him to save up for a studio which by 1994, at age 22, he had completed, with big wooden cabinets he built himself. He is preparing for another one-man show in September, painting child-laborers "who stretched their bones at a tender age."

Maria Luisa Fernando began her career as a portrait artist and art educator. Her interpretations of plucked blossoms border on the spiritual.

Two artists who started out as Dans protégés have since spread their wings. Felipe Mayoya tends Dans' lush flower garden in Baguio, which provides deep inspiration for his pointillist works of professional stature. He has participated in exhibits in Manila, earning enough to send his children to college.

Azor Pazcoguin was Dans' physical therapist. "He made me well," she says, after two back operations. Raised among the "Mabini painters" in his father's Ermita gallery, he says they are "real people—I enjoy being with them. What you see is what you get." Training under Dans, he paints sunlight-dappled rural scenes, and of late, with the Baguio Country Club experience, golf fairways.

Sculptures by Tito Sanchez—among them "Gomburza" at the University of the Philippines chapel premises, and "Father Arupe," the former Jesuit general—have long received acclaim. Akin to beneficiaries of "Guhit's" efforts who work with their hands as farmers, swineherds and broom makers, Sanchez used to till the soil and worked in a jeepney assembly shop.

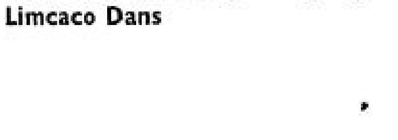
Besides being the driving force behind the fine stable of dedicated artists, Araceli Dans ranks among the Philippines' top painters. Her *callado* series of finely embroidered *piña* continues to re-invent itself, draped over broken fences, among gardenias and *bandera españolas,* seashells, and other assorted found objects.

Her other claim to fame may be that she is probably the youngest World War II guerrilla. At age 12, she drew propaganda leaflets and posters, a deeply clandestine activity in that period. The Limcaco ironing board hid her art work.

As extensive as the exhibit was, President Arroyo nevertheless lingered over each work, chatting with the artists and obviously enjoying the respite. They presented her with a Dans painting. The President also was pleased to discover that proceeds from the exhibit would benefit among Baguio's neediest denizens. Akap—the Alay sa Kapatid International Foundation of priests and nuns from various orders—organized poor farmers and families who were 1990 earthquake victims into income-generating cooperatives supported by several European governments and Philippine institutions. Sr. Esther Maria Cuvin, S.Sp.S, is its executive director.

Joan Orendain

"Guhit" will be on exhibit until April 10 at the Baguio Country Club ballroom.



"BAKURAN ni Aling Titang" by Araceli Limcaco Dans

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Belgian potter's new glaze

By Constantino C. Tejero

POTTERY is one of the oldest of the functional arts, but, surprisingly, there are only a few ceramicists in the country who have elevated it into a serious art. We count less than 10, and even then, two or three have foreign-sounding names.

Jeff van den Broeck is a Belgian stoneware potter married to a Filipina, and now a permanent resident of Baguio. A former journalist and senior official of the European Commission, he was a painter and ceramic artist at the Higher Institute for Visual Arts in Anderlech, Brussels.

He has had shows of his ceramics in Belgium, France, the Netherlands. His first exhibit in the country was held in the Sanctuary Gallery of Maryknoll in Baguio late last year.

An exhibit of his 46 stoneware pieces is ongoing until April 30 in Gallery 139 at Artlane, 3/F Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City. These are vases with impressed decorations, bottles, candleholders, platters, bowls, footed dishes—functional pieces that you'd rather have displayed for their beauty, if not for their steep prices, than actually use as everyday articles.

Stoneware is produced when the clay is high-fired until it matures between 1260°C and 1300°C.

After kneading and wedging the clay, then forming it on a wheel, the potter shapes and refines the final character of the pot. It is the artist's sensibility and skill that determines the final result.

The clay is put through 950°C for bisque firing, then glazed, and fired for about 12 hours until reaches 1300°C, when the clay body is sintered and becomes glass-like, very hard, and won't let water seep through.

The kiln is fueled with gas. This makes the colors different from those fired in electric kiln though they have the same glazes.

The glaze composed by Van den Broeck contains minerals such as potash feldspar, Cornish stone, whiting, kaolin, silica. The main color provided by red iron oxide gives a greenish hue, red, persimmon, brown, black

Here are impressed *tenmoku* vases of black and brown, and *shino* vases of light reddish glaze with speckles and accents of cream and blue.

Here also are pieces with an exquisite glaze that the artist describes as "elusive red copper": an impressed red vase; half-red, half-slate bottles; a white bottle with red shadow; vases with copper shadow; a copper water shine.

The impressed ash-glaze vases are predominantly olive and slate-green. A greenish glaze comes from ash.

Wood ash combined with feldspar and whiting gives a runny glaze that accentuates the relief incised or carved on the pot. Brushed-on decoration is pure iron oxide.

Most impressive are the platters, bowls and footed dishes with decorations that look like abstract and impressionist paintings. These are accidental features but the artist sees in them impressions of a landscape, fog in the mountain, storm, a cliff, a deep well, a mountain road, even a whole village, and biomorphic shapes such as a mouse, a fish, sharks, a seahorse on shore, an Easter bunny, even Adam and Eve.

It is the small details and subtle decorations that make these pieces rather European-looking, as distinguished from the Oriental-looking pottery of Jon Pettyjohn in the Pansol Studio just across the lane. The two potters are friends.

JEFF van den Broeck's faceted caddy, 12-cm high

A Minneapolis lesson for Manila

From page D8

trees that dot a nearby area. The fountain's form, it turns out, is also inspired by a novelty item the artists had acquired in 1962—a spoon resting on a lump of fake chocolate.

Save for this highlight and a few other pieces, the garden is decidedly a showcase of abstract art—from Martin Puryer's "Ampersand," Isamu Noguchi's "Shodo Shima Stone Study," to Ellsworth Kelly's "Double Curve."

"Ampersand," which flanks the entrance to the garden, for instance, is composed of two 14-ft high stone sentinels fashioned from a huge block of granite that Puryer found at the Cold Springs quarries, 75 miles northwest of the city. He then drove spikes into the massive stone to split it into two. Each piece went through a machine slate that resembled a giant pencil sharpener.

Depending on how you look at it, the pair does look like the tips of half-sharpened pencils. The rough texture and dark color, however, also remind us of undetonated bombs now misshapen and rusty with time.

"The contrast of form and surface," says the museum literature, "highlighted by the installation of the two pieces as inversions of each other, comments on such opposing themes as nature and culture, organic and man-made and stability and instability."

Zen-like

Noguchi has brought a Zen-like quality to his piece that explores the structural and textural possibilities of granite. It reminds us of a bird's nest with round forms bordered by granite slabs.

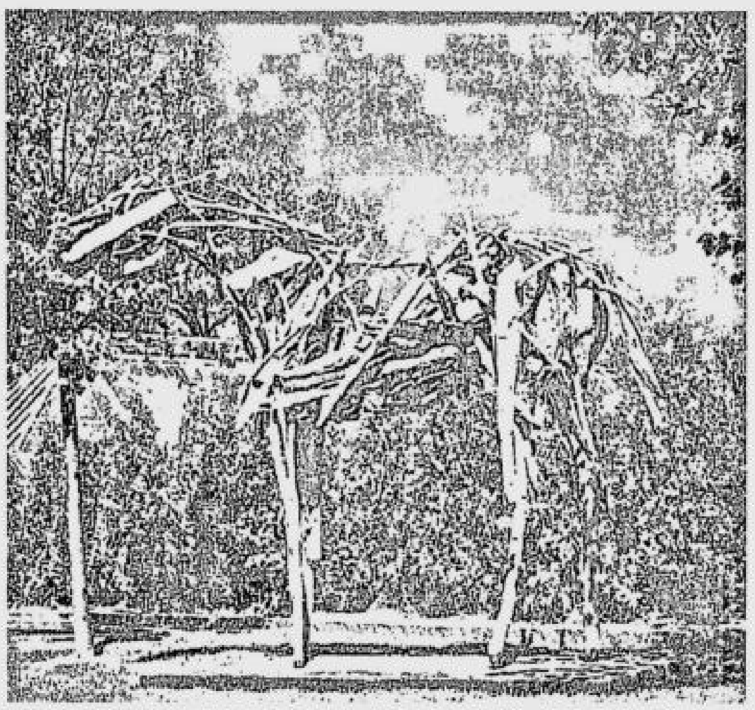
"A group of minimalist works addresses a variety of fundamental material issues such as form, mass and gravity, space and viewpoint," says the museum literature.

Kelly's bronze "Double Curve" falls under this category. It's perceived, at first, as two-dimensional. Yet, the same literature adds, one's sense of its volume and the spatial tension between two arching, 19-ft totem poles changes with one's viewpoint.

Deborah Butterfield's love for horses extends to her art. After collecting sticks, tree branches and bark, she cast each piece in bronze. The Montana rancher had then painstakingly pieced them together to come up with a sculpture that pays tribute to her favorite animal.

Elsewhere in the world, a politician has been busy erecting not one but several monuments as well. Only this time, they're bound to fail to heighten one's senses, but are likely to reveal some people's ignorance and naked greed.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



HORSE WITH A NAME. Deborah Butterfield's "Woodrow"

Restoring Panay Church . . .

From page D1

the altars said to have been crafted in Manila. The *retablos* were carved by the renowned town sculptor Joseph Bergano, or Sarhento Itak, in 1771.

In contrast to the ornate interior, the simplicity of the coral stone church façade is broken by pillars that mark the niches for statues of Sta. Monica and Sto. Tomas de Villanueva. The façade is imposing for its size, its massive and solid appearance, and for the blending of its lines and volumes," Father Galende says. "Shallow paired pilasters with narrow grooves in between divide the façade into rectangular sections, symmetrical and well-balanced. The main entrance has a simple semicircular arch flanked by two small statued niches. This is topped by a rectangular carving portraying the Augustinian emblem. The second level has an ornate niche and a rose window above it is complemented by a relief sculpture at the center of the pediment."

The glory of Panay Church is its bells. What is said to be the largest bell in the country hangs from a five-story belfry. The big bell was cast in the 19th century from 70 sacks of coins donated through a quota system from parishioners. "It measures 7 ft in diameter, 5 ft in height and weighs 10,400 kg," Father Galende says. "It was cast by Don Juan Basa of Iloilo City... [who] set up temporary shop at the foot of the town... When the bell was tried during the Angelus, the sound was so loud that every nearby town heard the voice of the bell of Panay."

Fading majesty

Today the church tries hard to retain its faded majesty. The Panay Church Restoration Foundation Inc. was organized to undertake the task of conserving the church. Professional consultations were done with Fr. René Javellana, S.J., a respected church scholar. Javellana noted that the stonework was still essentially sound except for some cracking, that the existing bell tower was renovated and strengthened with the introduction of a reinforced concrete structure within the original tower. Furthermore, the Parish Museum, which houses the artifacts from the church, is damp and needs an improved display and protection system to safeguard the few remaining treasures that have survived a rash of thefts that have seriously diminished the museum collection.

A second inspection undertaken by the National Historical Institute determined that the coral stone walls of the church were constantly damp; apparently the water underneath the walls could not evaporate. Drainage is needed to correct that condition: Damaging plant growths on the exterior walls must be removed. Moss grows on the wet wall surface, further damaging the walls. Control of bats that inhabit the church structure is essential to prevent further damage from their droppings.

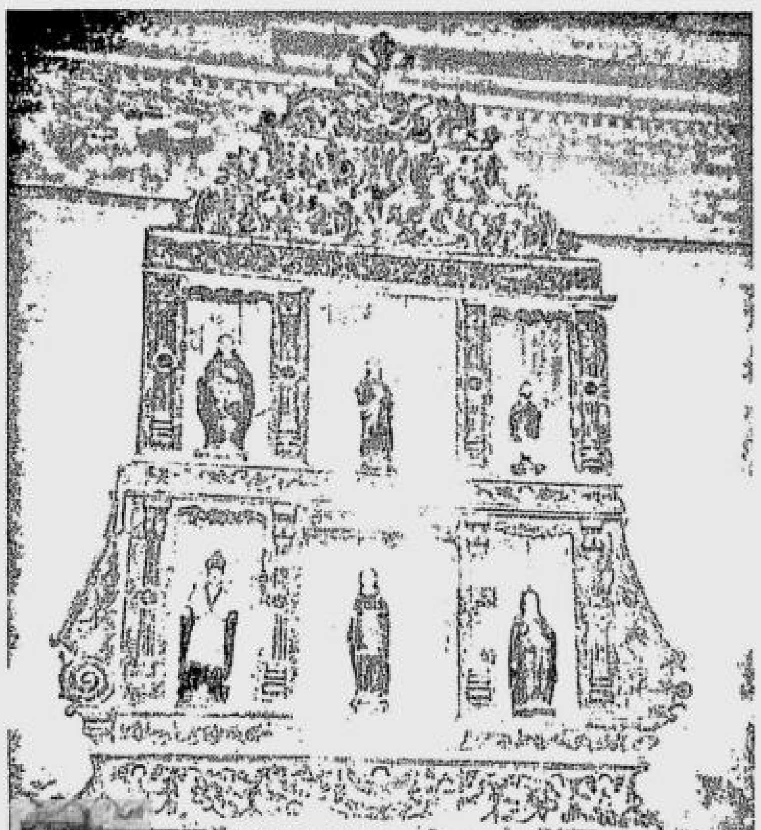
At present, the Panay Church Restoration Foundation is cooperating with Mayor Felipe Barredo to replace the roof of the church. This is only the beginning. With a long shopping list of conservation interventions that still has to be completed, the Foundation and the municipal government must find the professional expertise in order to ensure the correct conservation of their church, and most important, to raise funds from public and private sources to carry out the work.

Restoring Panay Church has begun in earnest. What is needed now is financial support from Panay residents all over the world, from government agencies mandated to support conservation projects, and from all of the Filipinos who care about the fate of one of the 26 churches declared National Treasures by our National Museum.

To contact the Panay Church Restoration Foundation Inc., call (036) 621-2022.

For information on summer weekend walking tours around Manila, see the Heritage Conservation Society webpage at www.hcsphils.org or call 522-2497 or 521-2239.

E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph



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Deadline for submission of entries as follows:
1st preliminary draw - April 27, 2002; 2nd preliminary draw - May 25, 2002; Grand draw - June 30, 2002.
Draw dates as follows: 1st preliminary - May 04, 2002; 2nd preliminary - June 01, 2002; Grand draw - July 06, 2002.

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2ND Preliminary Draw	(4) Living Room Showcase	(1) GMA, (1) Luzon, (1) Visayas, (1) Mindanao
	(4) Kitchen Showcase	(1) GMA, (1) Luzon, (1) Visayas, (1) Mindanao
Grand Draw	Grand Prize : P 1,000,000	(1) National
	(1) 2nd Prize : P 300,000	(1) National
	(2) 3rd Prize : P 100,000	(1) GMA, (1) Luzon, (1) Visayas, (1) Mindanao

See posters for details Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0002 Series of 2002

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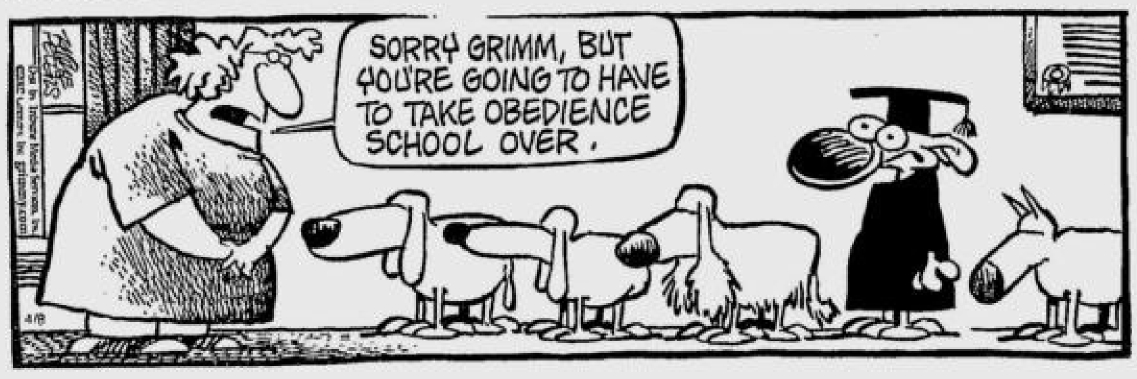
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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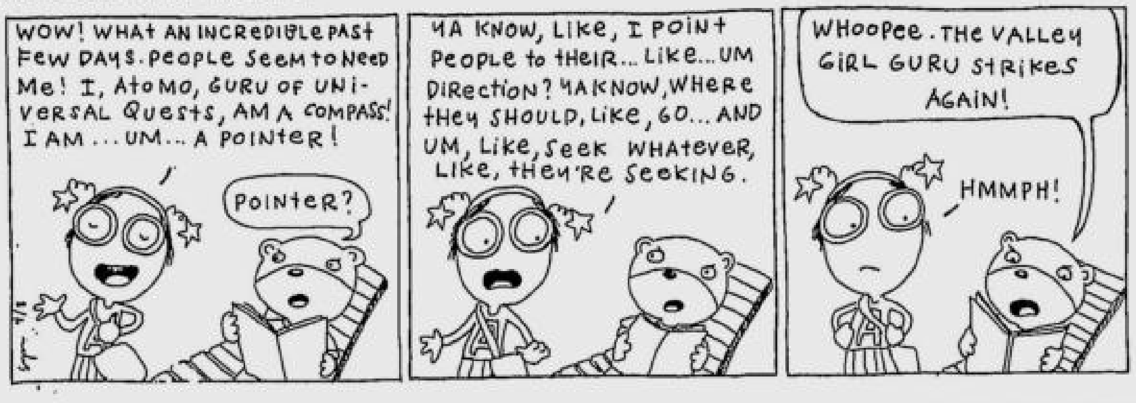
4/8

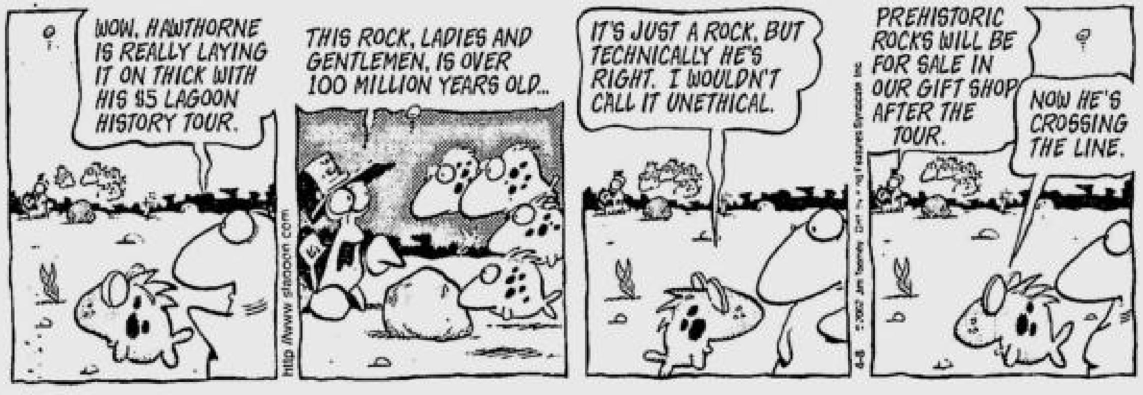
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WOW! WHAT AN INCREDIBLE PAST FEW DAYS. PEOPLE SEEM TO NEED ME! I, ATOMO, GURU OF UNIVERSAL QUESTS, AM A COMPASS! I AM ... UM... A POINTER!
POINTER?
YA KNOW, LIKE, I POINT PEOPLE TO THEIR... LIKE... UM DIRECTION? YA KNOW, WHERE THEY SHOULD, LIKE, GO... AND UM, LIKE, SEEK WHATEVER, LIKE, THEY'RE SEEKING.
WHOOPEE. THE VALLEY GIRL GURU STRIKES AGAIN!
HMMPH!

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY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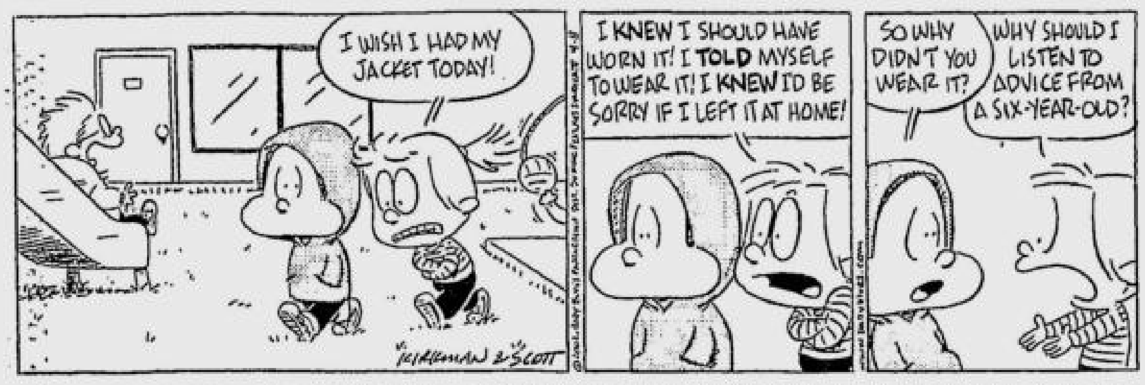
BY JERRY SCOTT


I WISH I HAD MY JACKET TODAY!
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE WORN IT! I TOLD MYSELF TO WEAR IT! I KNEW I'D BE SORRY IF I LEFT IT AT HOME!
SO WHY DIDN'T YOU WEAR IT?
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HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Julian Lennon, Betty Ford, John Gavin, Patricia Arquette

Happy Birthday: You will use new techniques in your work in order to stand out in the crowd this year. You will instinctively know what changes to make to enhance your appearance and your attitude. You will use your imagination to relate to others. Your numbers are 9, 12, 15, 23, 31, 38

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You may want to keep your thoughts to yourself for the time being. Someone you consider to be a friend may not keep a secret. Focus on making your home a place of comfort.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Friends, partners and people you meet through organizations you belong to will be there to help you out. Let everyone know your ideas and drum up some enthusiasm.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't get down and depressed. Your confusion regarding your professional direction can be cleared up if you research the courses available to you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): It's time to get on with life by involving yourself in activities that interest you. Your attitude is changing Having more fun should be your intent.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Unusual financial opportunities are present. Take the initiative and make some moves that will lead to financial gains. You should invest in yourself, not in someone asking for a donation.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): If you take care of all your responsibilities quickly you should have time to get out and mingle with some interesting people. It's high time you did things that you enjoy. Group participation will bring you fabulous results.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You should be able to get ahead today. Hard work will pay off and doors will open due to your contentiousness. Solid plans can lead to all sorts of interesting proposals.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The more time you have to get involved in creative hobbies today the better. You may discover that something you enjoy doing can turn into a moneymaker with a little extra work and promotion.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You should be trying to build your assets and prepare for your future security. Putting money into your home will add value and make your place more comfortable.

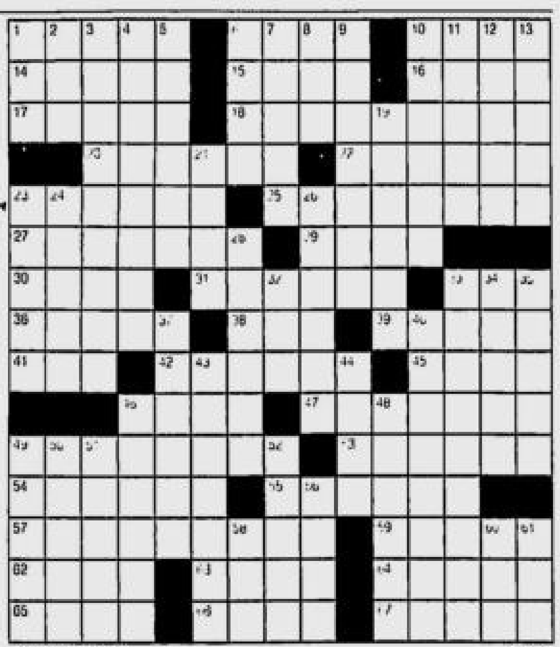
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can ask for favors if you explain everything that you are trying to accomplish to someone who is in a position to help you. Moneymaking ventures will pay if do everything by the book.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): If you aren't happy with your current position consider doing something a little more unusual. The rewards will be far greater if you are passionate about what you do.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You'll be emotional today. Don't let someone you work with limit you or push too many responsibilities your way. You need a little time to yourself.

Birthday Baby: You will fight hard to achieve your place in society. You will have leadership abilities, and will make a difference to organizations you believe in if you are given the chance. You will always be looking and listening for new ideas that will help you obtain the power you desire.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Chris Page
South Norwalk, CT
4/8/02

ACROSS
1 Actor George
6 Cry of distress
10 Disguise
14 Baghdad resident
15 Protective ditch
16 S-shaped molding
17 "The Plague" author
18 Top dog
20 Bishops' toppers
22 Soccer side
23 Climbed
25 Height
27 Boeotian poet
29 Opening
30 Muscat's country
31 Haphazardly
33 Archaeologist's site
36 Having radial stripes
38 Patriotic org.
39 Redolence
41 Double bend
42 Aviator
45 __ podrida
46 High point
47 Ascended
49 Silkworm moth
53 Composer Edward's family
54 Actress Silverstone
55 Pasty
57 Magnetic accelerators
59 John Smith, perhaps
62 Ripened
63 Thicket unit
64 Cappelletti and Marchetti
65 Greek harp
66 Antitoxins
67 Philadelphia player

DOWN
1 __ transit gloria mundi
2 Stat for Randy Johnson
3 Radioactive decay emissions
4 Hooked, as a nose
5 Hark
6 __ Khayyam
7 "The Planets" composer
8 Siesta
9 He who "loved not wisely, but too well"
10 Point in time
11 Desert plant
12 Monica of the courts
13 Laments loudly
19 Permits
21 Writer Ferber
23 Make a goal
24 Deep sleeps
26 Guru's group
28 Gromyko or Sakharov
32 Edible tuber
33 Type of aircraft
34 More poorly
35 Summer blooms, briefly
37 Indian bandit
40 Genghis Khan's home
43 Bestows
44 Christmas carol
46 Series of arches
48 Liquid lost in transit
49 Conspiracy group
50 Poetic lament
51 Traffic cop, perhaps
52 Ed of "Lou Grant"
56 Not in port
58 Mispickel or galena
60 Internet letters
61 Compass dir.

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	S	P	S	■	C	L	I	M	B	■	S	C	A	R
T	A	R	T	■	O	U	T	E	R	■	T	O	F	U
B	R	A	E	■	A	S	S	A	I	L	A	N	T	S
A	T	T	R	A	C	T	■	L	A	E	R	T	E	S
T	R	E	N	C	H	E	S	■	R	E	T	I	R	E
S	E	D	E	R	■	R	A	P	■	R	E	N	A	L
■	■	■	R	E	P	L	I	E	S	■	D	U	L	L
S	K	I	■	S	I	E	N	N	A	S	■	E	L	S
T	A	N	S	■	E	S	T	E	L	L	E	■	■	■
A	L	T	A	R	■	S	E	T	■	I	N	D	I	A
N	A	R	R	O	W	■	D	R	E	D	G	E	R	S
C	H	E	A	P	E	N	■	A	M	E	R	C	E	S
H	A	P	P	E	N	E	D	T	O	■	A	R	N	O
E	R	I	E	■	D	R	I	E	R	■	M	E	I	R
S	I	D	S	■	S	O	D	D	Y	■	S	E	C	T

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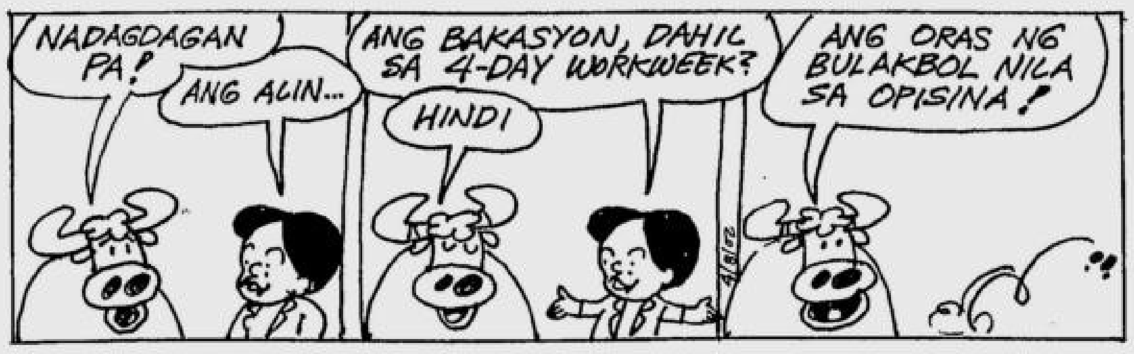
4/8/02

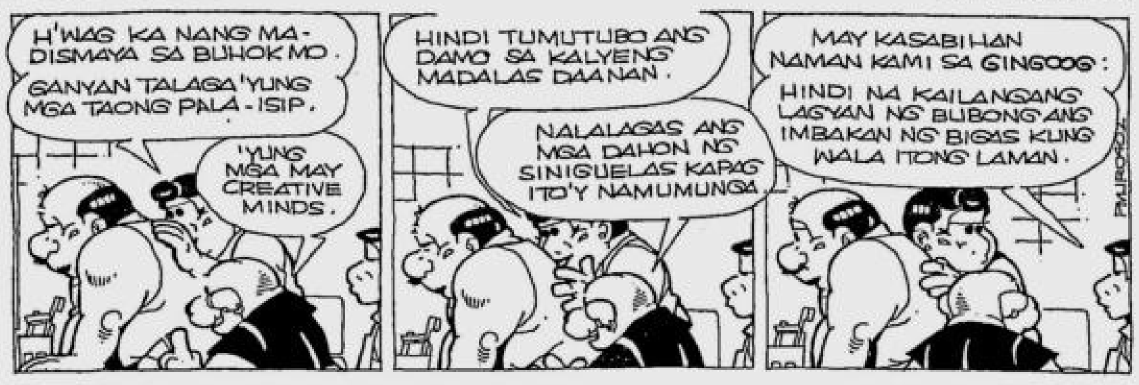
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NADAGDAGAN PA!
ANG ALIN...
ANG BAKASYON, DAHIL SA 4-DAY WORKWEEK?
HINDI
ANG ORAS NG BULAKBOL NILA SA OPISINA!

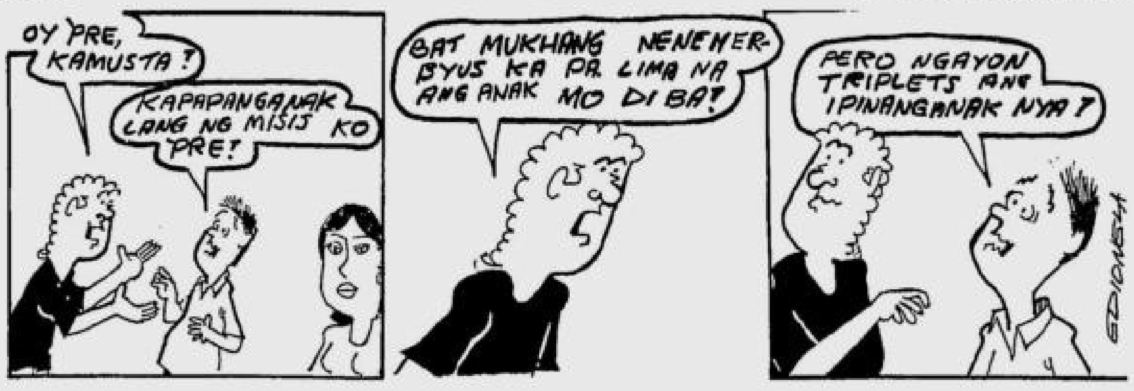
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


H'WAG KA NANG MADISMAYA SA BUHOK MO.
GANYAN TALAGA 'YUNG MGA TAONG PALA-ISIP.
'YUNG MGA MAY CREATIVE MINDS.
HINDI TUMUTUBO ANG DAMO SA KALYENG MADALAS DAANAN.
NALALAGAS ANG MGA DAHON NG SINIGUELAS KAPAG ITO'Y NAMUMUNGA.
MAY KASABIHAN NAMAN KAMI SA GINGOOG:
HINDI NA KAILANGANG LAGYAN NG BUBONG ANG IMBAKAN NG BIGAS KUNG WALA ITONG LAMAN.
PMJUNIOR

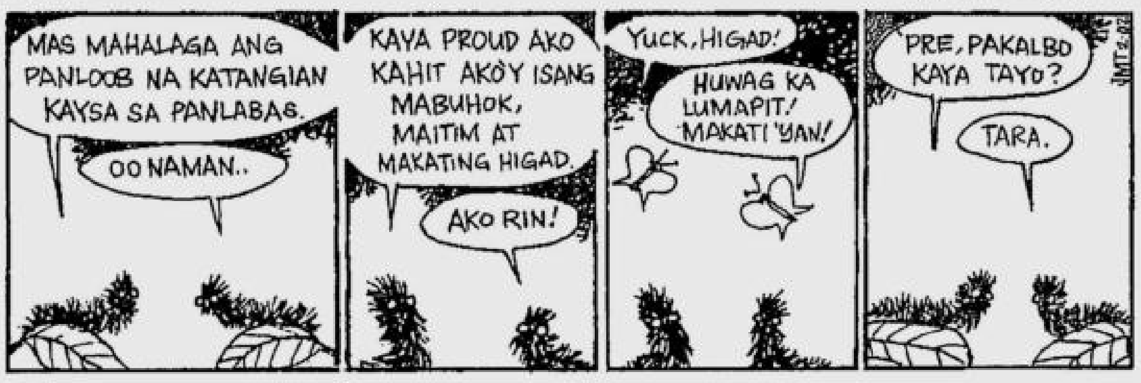
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


OY PRE, KAMUSTA?
KAPAPANGANAK LANG NG MISIS KO PRE!
BAT MUKHANG NENENERBYUS KA PA. LIMA NA ANG ANAK MO DI BA?
PERO NGAYON TRIPLETS ANG IPINANGANAK NYA?
EDIONELA

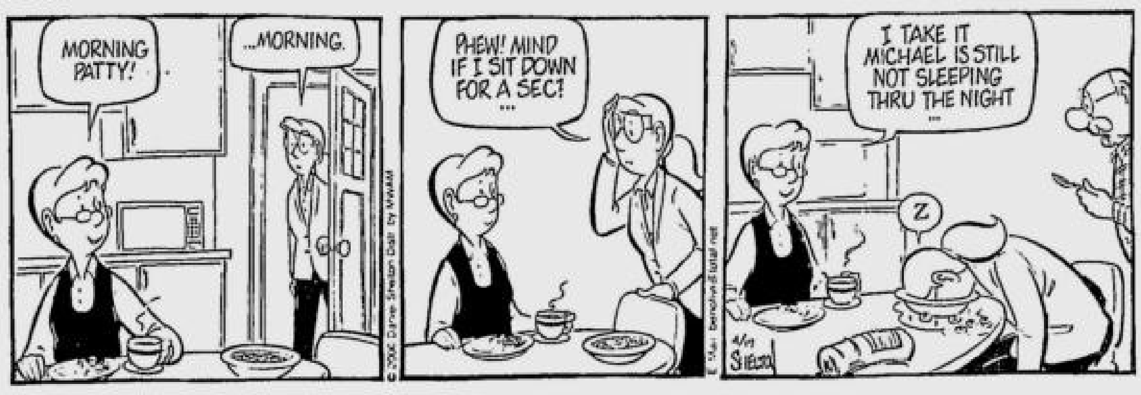
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MAS MAHALAGA ANG PANLOOB NA KATANGIAN KAYSA SA PANLABAS.
OO NAMAN..
KAYA PROUD AKO KAHIT AKO'Y ISANG MABUHOK, MAITIM AT MAKATING HIGAD.
AKO RIN!
YUCK, HIGAD!
HUWAG KA LUMAPIT! MAKATI 'YAN!
PRE, PAKALBO KAYA TAYO?
TARA.

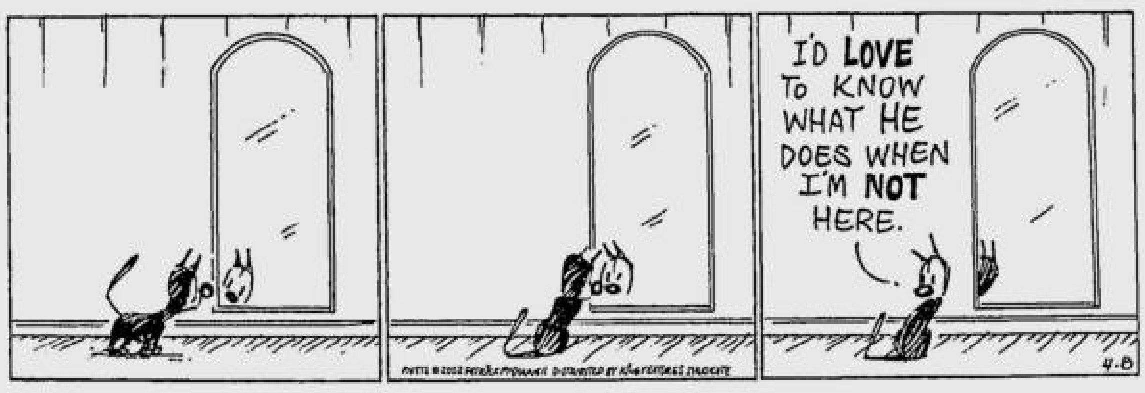
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MORNING PATTY!
...MORNING.
PHEW! MIND IF I SIT DOWN FOR A SEC! ...
I TAKE IT MICHAEL IS STILL NOT SLEEPING THRU THE NIGHT ...
Z
4/8
SHELTON

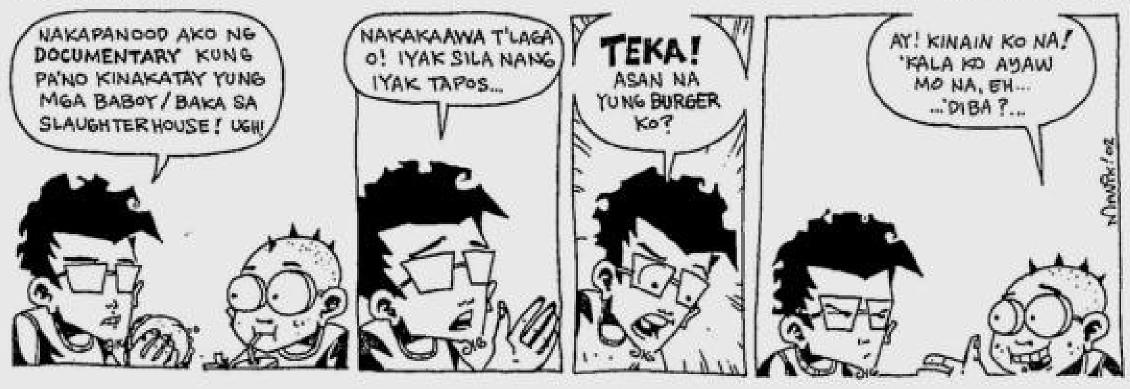
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'D LOVE TO KNOW WHAT HE DOES WHEN I'M NOT HERE.
4-8

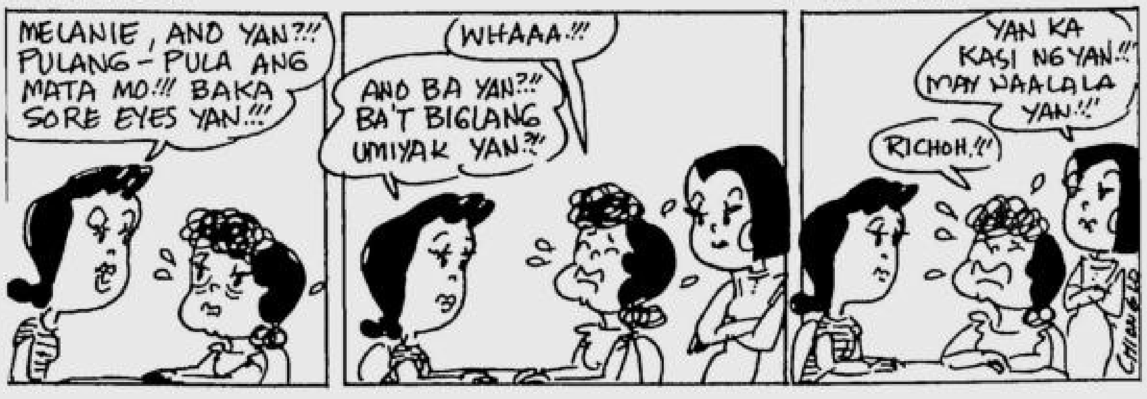
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


NAKAPANOOD AKO NG DOCUMENTARY KUNG PA'NO KINAKATAY YUNG MGA BABOY / BAKA SA SLAUGHTERHOUSE! UGH!
NAKAKAAWA T'LAGA O! IYAK SILA NANG IYAK TAPOS...
TEKA! ASAN NA YUNG BURGER KO?
AY! KINAIN KO NA! 'KALA KO AYAW MO NA, EH... ...'DIBA?...
MANIX!02

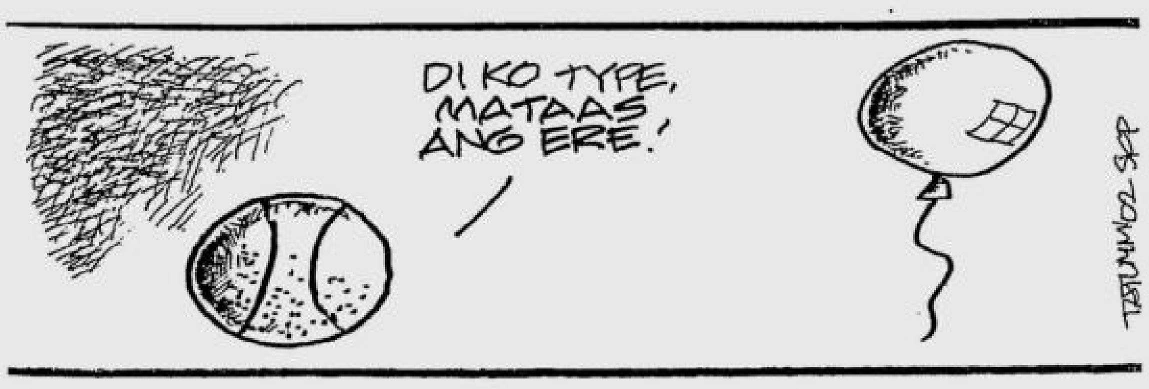
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, ANO YAN?!! PULANG-PULA ANG MATA MO!!! BAKA SORE EYES YAN!!!
WHAAA!!!
ANO BA YAN?!! BA'T BIGLANG UMIYAK YAN?!!
YAN KA KASI NG YAN!!! MAY NAALALA YAN!!!
RICHOH!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DI KO TYPE, MATAAS ANG ERE!
TATUM'02 SAP

‘Treasures’ at Duemila

VISUAL ARTS

'SMALL TREASURES' AT GALLERIA DUEMILA. Galleria Duemila presents "Small Treasures," an exhibit of small-scale paintings by two generations of Philippine masters, from Juan Luna to H.R. Ocampo, April 12-30 at the Gallery, 4/L Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit consists of 35 small works from the Duemila collection that offer a glimpse of the artists and their visual styles that served as historical markers in Philippine painting. The exhibit includes Juan Luna's "Mi Modela Española" and "Saint Cadeaux," and a landscape by Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo. Half of the works exemplify the prewar conservative academic tradition represented by the works of Fernando Amorsolo, Jorge Pineda and Isidro Ancheta. The other half consists of works from pioneers of Philippine postwar modernist painting, such as H.R. Ocampo, Vicente Manansala, Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Jose Joya, Cesar Legaspi, Juvenal Sanso and Malang Santos, comprising the initial generation of "neo-realist" painters who continued the legacy of the late Victorio Edades, the Father of Philippine Modern Art, and who subsequently deviated from the formal academic prescriptions of the conservative Amorsolo School. Call 634-3261 and 831-9990.

JOINT EXHIBIT. Ivee Olivares-Mellor and Plet C. Bolipata are holding a two-woman show, "Of Landscapes and Paper Dolls II," until April 24 at the Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City. Call 897-7877/6990.

ROJAS AT GALLERY 139. Stella Rojas opens her 28th one-woman show at Gallery 139, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City on April 11. Dubbed "Paris: My Spiritual Home," Rojas expands her painting into new themes such as still life, interiors and the human figure alongside her signature collections of Pariscapes. These new subjects are rendered in colors and technique uncharacteristic of the artist's past works. Call 633-7363.

MANALANG AT THE DRAWING ROOM. Pep Manalang presents her recent works in "Painted Photographs" at The Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City. The exhibit consists of monochrome photographs taken by the artist and altered by the addition of paint and modeling paste into abstract landscapes. Call 897-6990/7877.

ALCAZAREN AT THE FINALE. Multimedia artist Juan Alcazaren holds his eighth one-man exhibit, "Space Tourist," at the Finale Art Gallery, 4/L SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City, from April 23 to May 5. Call 634-2411.

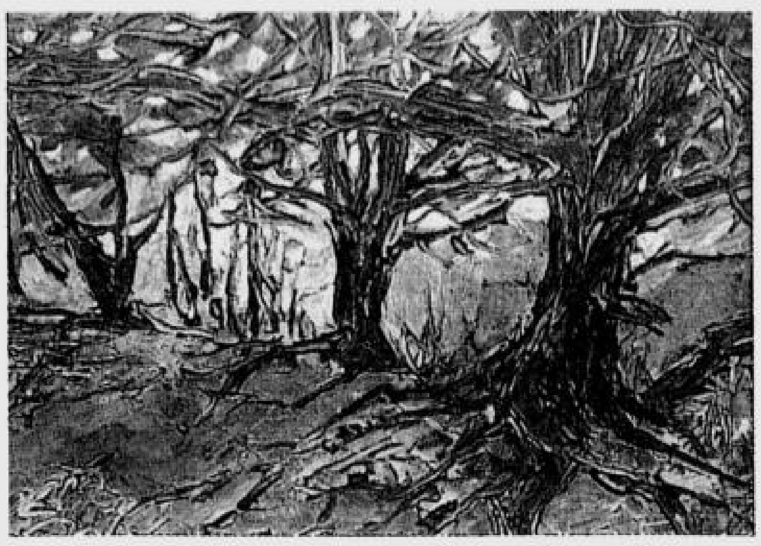
TAN AT THE CRUCIBLE. Sherwin S.C. Tan presents his fourth one-man show, "Shekinah," an exhibit of vivacious oriental strokes on canvas and glazed ceramic masks. The exhibit runs until April 17 at the Crucible, 4/L Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Call 635-6061.

TRAVELING EXHIBIT. Matthias Wahner is the "man" in, as well as behind, "Man without Qualities," an unusual photo-art traveling exhibit sponsored by Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes Manila. The fictive photographs featured in the exhibit are actually products of what has been described as the modern-day "digital darkroom," through a photographic technique called "electronic image processing." In black-and-white, the pictures have been culled from a huge pile of archival photographs kept at Munich's state museum. The exhibit will be on view at Hiraya Gallery, 530 United Nations Ave., Ermita, Manila, from April 13-30. Call 523-3331.

HUSBAND-AND-WIFE EXHIBIT. A novel back-to-back exhibit of two painters, husband and wife Jose V. and Tita Ayala, present "Counterpoint" at the US Gaisano Citimall's Gallery 5 from April 15 to May 15. Call Gallery 5 (Davao) 224-0808 local 807.

CAVITE GALLERY EXHIBIT. Samoy Arts Museum presents an exhibit dubbed "Imaginative" until May 31. Call (046) 434-2625 or visit Samoy Arts Museum at 151 E. Gomez St., Bacoor, Cavite.

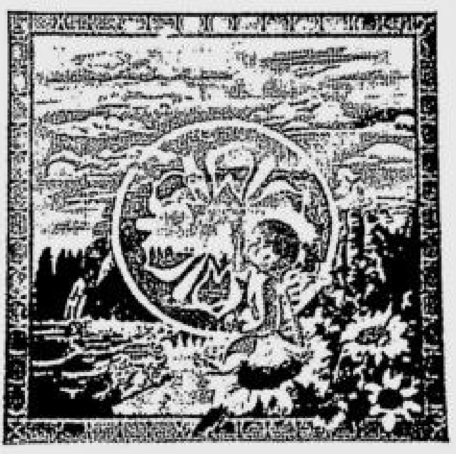
SUMMER ART WORKSHOP. Faber-Castell announces a series of free workshops, which will be held in various branches of SM Supermalls in Metro Manila beginning this month. Schedule of workshops is: April 16-17, SM Megamall, Atrium A; April 30 to May 2, SM City Manila Entertainment Plaza; May 14-15, SM Southmall activity center; and May 28-29, SM Fairview Activity Center. Call 361-7391 to 92.



"TANGLED Trees," acrylic on paper, by Ivee Olivares Mellor at The Drawing Room

NUDES AT ALLEGRO
Nudes in brown pastel by E.R. Tagle are on view this month at the Allegro Caffe Italiano, G/L Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 816-0904 or (0917) 972-6223.

Victor Bella to hold painting workshops for kids and adults



"THE ANGEL"

INDUSTRIAL artist and painter Victor Bella, who graduated with a fine arts degree at the Maastricht Academy of visual arts in Holland, offers his 9th Summer Painting Workshop for kids and adults.

The workshop will cover drawing and painting (pencil, pastels, pen and ink, watercolor, acrylic and oil), such subjects as landscapes, flowers, portraits and figures. Styles covered are classic realism, surrealism, fauvism, impressionism and abstracts.

Victor Bella has mounted five solo exhibits. For work samples visit www.geocities.com/victor_bella.

Registration is until April 12. Lessons will begin on April 10 and 12 at 30 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati.

Bella is also offering painting workshops at Dreams Shop at Ayala Center, Quad. Call Artlife Enterprises, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., and 1-5 p.m., at 890-3778 or (0917) 757-6690.

SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority chair Felicito Payumo (third from right), together with Daisy Payumo and Jose Mari Vargas, managing director of Subic Bay Yatch Club, cuts the ceremonial ribbon during the formal opening of "Gloria Atbp" by George Sison-Tagle (center) at the Subic Bay Yatch Club. Assisting them are Mathew Mirnado and Beth Sison-Tagle.

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Tel. Nos: ____

A Minneapolis lesson for Manila

By Alex Y. Vergara

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza can learn a great deal from the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota on the proper use of open spaces without ruffling the feathers of conservationists and environmentalists.

Since its opening in 1988, the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden has become a landmark of the city and its "unidentical" twin, St. Paul, drawing more than three million visitors to date.

The 11-acre attraction, an outdoor annex of the famed Walker Art Center, is home to more than 40 works of art, either permanent or temporary installations, by established and emerging artists. Part of the garden's allure, of course, is the wide and open expanse of land dotted with trees and hedges, and blanketed by either grass or snow depending on the season.

First, a lesson on American geography. The New York Times once described land-locked Minnesota in 1885 as an "American Siberia" for its long, cold winters and the absence of warm ocean currents. Of course, Minnesotans then didn't warm up to such a cold description. But it does get chilly, say longtime residents, long before the Christmas tree and mistletoe are in place.

Minnesotans naturally make the most out of their short summer before the first leaves start to fall. And the garden, among other natural and man-made attractions, provides them with an ideal venue to do just that.

A favorite

Unlike the adjacent and covered Walker Art Center, one need not pay $6 entrance fee to imbibe culture—both visual and the performing arts—since the garden is also a favorite venue for shows—and bask in the sunshine in this outdoor gallery. They come free with the city's balmy air.

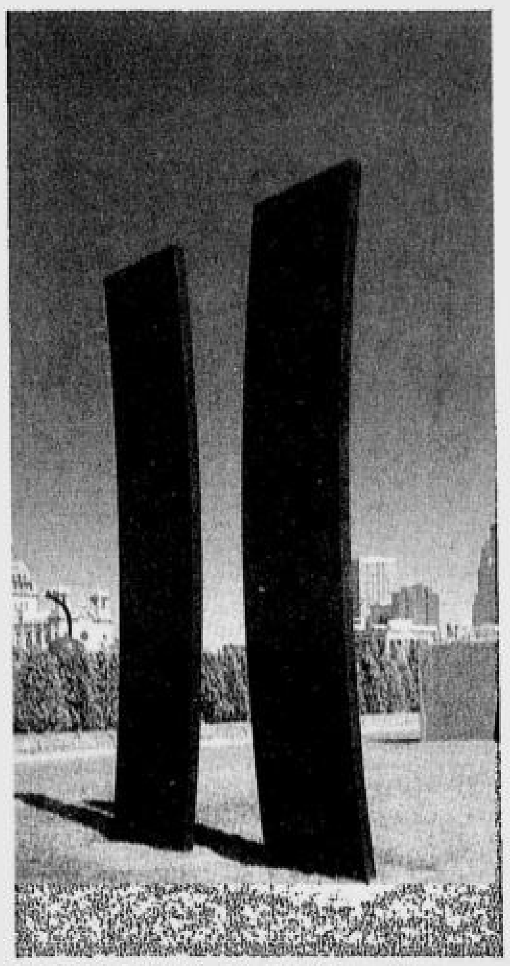
"Isn't this place lovely," exclaims Mary Stucky, a resident of St. Paul and one of our hosts. "We need to have something like this to help us get through the long winter."

The place also has an indoor component in the form of a temperature-controlled greenhouse where tropical plants such as orchids and red hibiscus (*gumamela* to you and me) thrive all-year round. Called the Sage and John Cowles Conservatory, the steel-and-glass structure has a concrete walkway for visitors:

A 22-ft high "Standing Glass Fish" designed by Frank Gehry (yes, the same architect behind the famed Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain) crowns the central oasis where palm trees and a reflecting pool used to be. Alas, the area is undergoing repair, and was turned upside down when we visited last summer.

"The palm trees grew so tall that they breached the glass ceiling," Stucky explains as she points to several visible cracks above us. "They're looking for replacements that won't grow as big."

Now, who would have thought that the park, like the now threatened Mehan Gardens in Manila, used to be idle land where occasional baseball games were once held? The city government and the Walker Art Center's generous donors are certainly doing a good job of maintaining it.



MIRROR IMAGE. "Double Curve" by Ellsworth Kelly

Edward Larrabee Barnes, who also worked on the cube-like Walker Art Center, had originally designed the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. The symmetrical layout, which echoes the museum building's minimalist architecture, is said to be inspired by formal gardens of 18th-century Italy, with four identically sized plazas lined by evergreens and separated by broad walkways.

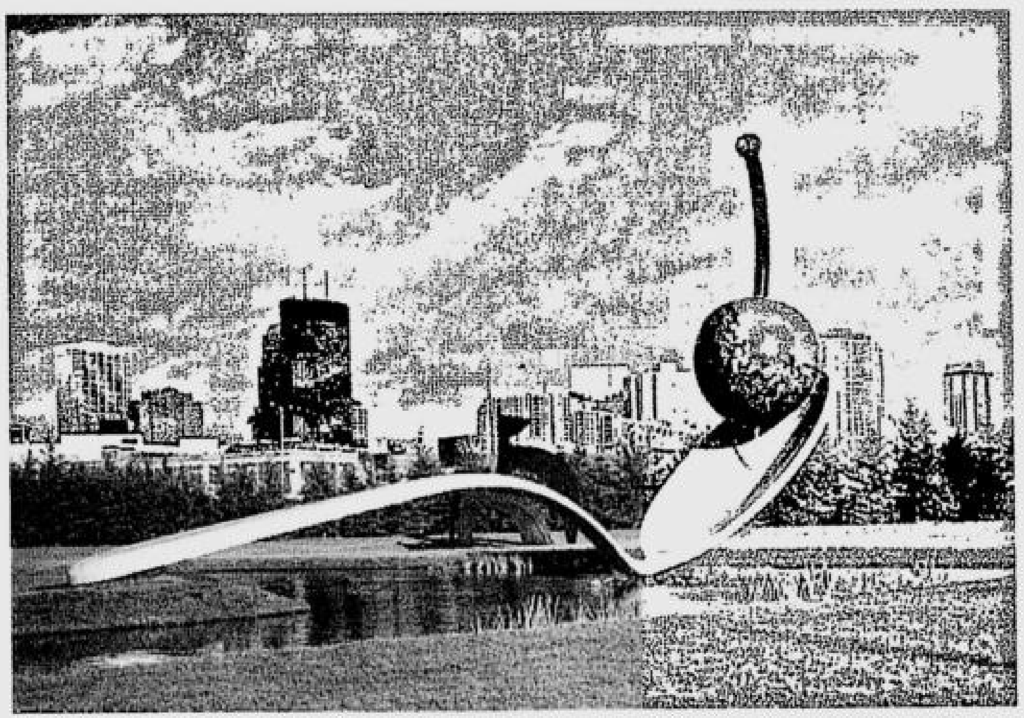
Open

Beyond the plaza is an open expanse that provides a more informal viewing environment with no less than the Minneapolis skyline, including a cathedral, looming in the horizon. An additional 3.5 acres of land were added in 1992 for this purpose.

Thus, the garden now includes the "Spoonbridge and Cherry," an oversized sculpture cum fountain designed by the couple Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen as a humorous commentary on America's pop culture. Think Andy Warhol's take on a can of Campbell's soup on canvas decades earlier.

Indeed, everything in America is big, including its works of art. The gigantic steel-and-aluminum piece, says a museum literature, had been manufactured in two East Coast shipyards and assembled in the garden, where it spans a pond shaped like the seed of linden

A MINNEAPOLIS/ p.D3



HOW SWEET IT IS. Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen's "Spoonbridge and Cherry."

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GT Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. H.V. dela Costa St.	631-3007 • 631-3045 Robinsons Equitable Tower, ADB Ave.	410-3709 • 410-3710 Cedar Executive Bldg. Timog Avenue	Sunshine Square Plaza	Citibank-Frabelle Bldg. Alabang-Zapote Rd.	City Plaza Tower, Plaza del Conde St.	Q Plaza Congressional Avenue	Dan's Marketing Bldg., McArthur Highway, San Fernando	Keppel Centre, Cebu City

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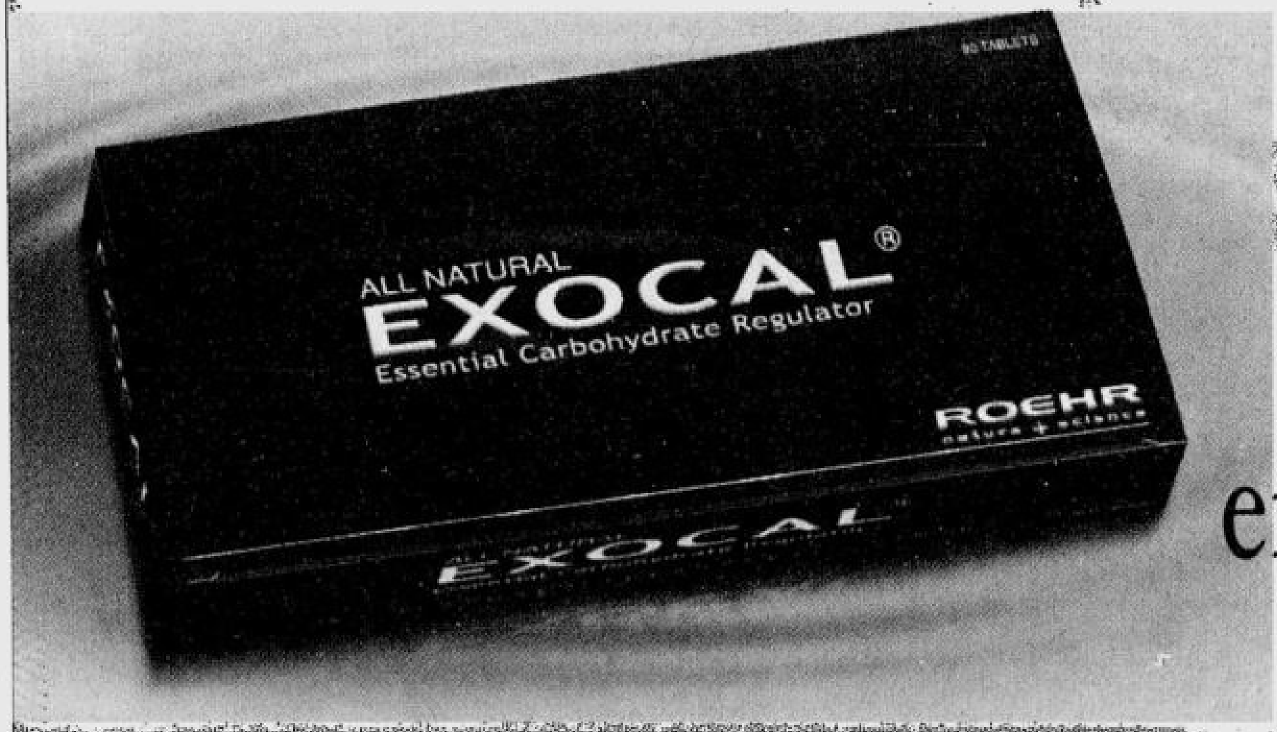
MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SAT. (8 AM - 5 PM) / SUN. (10 AM - 3 PM)



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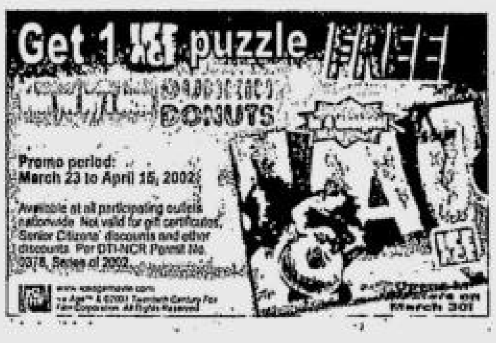
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Arts/Design

Despite neglect, Lucio San Pedro and Levi Celerio remained faithful to their Muse

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

MAESTRO Lucio San Pedro, Levi Celerio and I had a common friend to whom we ran if we wanted a good lunch. During those lunches, we would talk about the Filipino artists of their generation as well as those of mine.

A few months back, Levi called this friend from the hospital where he had been confined and meekly asked, "Could you do something about my hospital bills, please." Our friend called the CCP and NCCA to look for help. It was then that I realized that frequent trips to the hospitals had become the common plight of Filipino artists in their late years.

Levi and I later met and upon

DESPITE/ p.E2

LEVI Celerio makes magnificent music out of a leaf.

PHOTO FROM MABUHAY MAGAZINE

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Despite neglect, Lucio San Pedro and Levi Celerio remained faithful to their Muse

From page E1

knowing I was from Bicol, he wrote new Tagalog lyrics for the Bikol folk song, "Sarung Banggi," in less than 10 minutes. He dedicated the new lyrics to me. When I sang the Tagalog version, the words fitted perfectly with the music just like the original Bikol version.

A few days later, Levi had a bad fall (when he was young, he fell from a tree and injured his wrist—that cut short his violin career). So he was soon back at the hospital where his other ailments surfaced.

When Levi died last week, I got acquainted again with his immense accomplishments. I got peeved by this arts chronicler who ended her article with a line about his 12 children from "four failed relationships," which was a low blow. I'd say that Levi led a colorful if meaningful life away from the trappings of a fat bank account.

Levi lived and breathed poetry and music. The sight of him playing on a battered violin and his versatile leaf in those dingy coffee shops never failed to awe and inspire.

To anyone's relief, he admitted he actually enjoyed what he was doing and earning P1,000 weekly for those shows. But I asked myself: why do national treasures end up as entertainers in restaurants? Why do national treasures have to teach to death to survive? (The 92-year-old Mercedes Matias Santiago, the first Filipino to sing Lucia di Lammermoor, has been teaching for more than 50 years and she has not been recognized or cited by any cultural agency or institution.)

LUCIO San Pedro (right) with Cecile Licad and the author

> Deprived of royalties and always abused for their good graces, the two National Artists who collaborated on the sublime 'Sa Ugoy ng Duyan' never became bitter and exuded goodwill and good humor up to the very end

Maestro Lucio San Pedro still had to work even after he was proclaimed National Artist. Up to the time of his death, he still lived in the same modest house by the Angono highway where he composed in a small room with an upright piano.

A painter related a story that even as the Maestro got weaker and weaker by the day, he would ask to be brought near the lake to compose or conduct a symphonic poem in the making. Like Levi, Maestro San Pedro lived and breathed music but wasn't keen on running after rich establishments using his music without paying him royalties. (His "Sa Ugoy ng Duyan" was used in a commercial without his authorization and when I asked him if he was paid by the advertising agency for the use of his music, he shook his head. When I wrote about it, he said the ad agency frantically got in touch with him.)

That was the time he told me that "Ugoy" was conceived as early as 1946 when he went to New York. At that time, he said it took 27 days of travel by steamboat to reach the Big Apple from Manila. The route started from Manila to Hong Kong, Yokohama to Shanghai and then on to California. From Pasadena, he traveled five more days by cross-country train to New York. "The idea for 'Sa Ugoy' was already clear in my mind," he said. "It was meant for my mother from whom I took one melody, which is about a mother lulling her baby to sleep. On the way back to Manila in 1947, I met Levi Celerio in Honolulu. He wrote the lyrics while we were sailing in the Pacific Ocean for weeks and when we arrived in Manila, 'Sa Ugoy ng Duyan' was finished."

Among the very first singers to perform the classic were the late baritone Aurelio Estanislao and soprano Evelyn Mandac. Now it is a standard in any recitalist's repertoire.

Did composing come easy for Maestro San Pedro all the time?

He often started with a blank mind and when music started filtering in, it was more because of an urge to do something and not because of an "inspiration." The music often haunted him. More often than not, ideas were hard to come by. When he composed "The Last Testament" based on the poems of the late Ninoy Aquino, he struggled. "For days, I couldn't write until I heard a tragic chord in my mind introduced by a bassoon," he said. "The rest just flowed and with me working night and day, the composition was finished in a week."

On the Philippine premiere of the work 13 years ago at the CCP, I saw a teary-eyed Ms Aurora Aquino and overheard her telling her companion, "I have never been moved by music as touching as this one."

In his last years, the Maestro was still teaching and conducting brass bands and we collaborated in festival concerts in Angono. Before the concerts, he accompanied me as I scoured the town for romantic concert venues and we ended up doing concerts on a street near Perdigon Vocalan's exotic restaurant. I hired his symphonic band and introduced a new tenor soloist who shook at the thought he would be conducted by a Lucio San Pedro. The Maestro himself was in awe of piano prodigy Makie Misawa who played in a battered Trebel piano and sounded like she had a Steinway grand.

My last encounters with the Maestro were in Malacañang when Cecile Licad got a presidential medal, when I asked him to rearrange a Bicol song for my Catanduanes Arts Festival to be sung by tenor Gary del Rosario, who went on to receive his first standing ovation in the island.

The Maestro was clearly open to people who loved and promoted music. He, Levi and I loved to laugh at the realization that years of being involved in music didn't exactly land us in exclusive villages where musicians did fund-raising concerts to install centralized air conditioners for the church. We all loved and promoted music—not from confines of air-conditioned cars, but in the boundless confines of the common people who didn't know Mozart but would promptly shed a tear over a well-played adagio movement.

When I think of Maestro San Pedro and Levi Celerio now, I think of the still struggling artists who must break their backs to earn a living and still make music at the twilight of their hapless lives.

To their credit, the Maestro and Levi made sublime music without the benefit of computer gadgets, which can make composing look like a mere child's caprice. When I heard of a new generation of composers doing composition through the magic of computers, I told myself today's composers have easy access to technology but with very little empathy with the human spirit.

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines will pay tribute to National Artist Levi Celerio in a necrological service on April 10, 9 a.m. at the CCP Main Theater. They will also pay tribute to National Artist Lucio D. San Pedro in a necrological service at the same time and venue the next day. President Macapagal-Arroyo will grace both events.

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SMART

A sampling of Levi's lyrics

Compiled by Michael M. Coroza
Contributor

Sa Ugoy ng Duyan
(Suite Pastoral)
(Music by Lucio San Pedro)

Sana'y di nagmaliw ang dati kong araw
Nang munti pang bata sa piling ni Nanay,
Ibig kong maulit ang awit ni Inang mahal,
Awit ng pag-ibig habang ako'y nasa duyan.

Sa aking pagtulog na labis ang himbing
Ang bantay ko'y tala, ang tanod ko'y bituin;
Sa piling ni Nanay, langit ang buhay,
Puso kong may dusa, sabik sa ugoy ng duyan.

Gaano Ko Ikaw Kamahal
(Music by Ernani Cuenco)

Ang pag-ibig ko sa 'yo ay tunay
Nais ko sanang patunayan
Huwag ka lang mag-alinlangan.
Ang pag-ibig ko'y hindi kukupas
Tulad din ng umagang
May pag-asang sumisikat.

Ang ating buhay
Maikli aking hirang
Kung kaya kailangan
Ng pagsuyong wagas kailanman.

Ang sumpa ko ay iyong asahan
Ikaw lamang ang aking iibigin magpakailanman.

Saan Ka Man Naroroon
(Music by Restie Umali)

Saan ka man naroroon, sinta,
Pag-ibig kong wagas ang 'yong madarama.
Kailan pa man sa iyo'y di lilimot
Pusong wagas sa 'yong pag-irog.

Saan ka man naroroon, sinta,
Pangarap ko'y ikaw pagkat mahal kita.
Asahan mong sa habang panahon
Alaala kita saan ka man naroroon.

Dungawin Mo Hirang
(Music ni Santiago Suarez)

Irog ko'y pakinggan, awit na mapanglaw
Na nagbuhat sa isang pusong nagmamahal.
Huwag mong ipagkait, awa mo'y ilawit
Sa abang puso kong naghihirap sa pag-ibig.

Dungawin mo, hirang, ang nananambitan,
Kahit sulyap mo man lamang iyong idampulay.
Sapagkat ikaw lamang ang tanging dalanginan
Ng puso kong dahil sa iyo'y nabubuhay.

Sapagkat Kami ay Tao Lamang
(Music ni Tony Maiquez)

Puso kahit hindi turuan,
Nakapagtataka, natututuhan din ang magmahal
Tunay, kami'y nagmamahalan,
Kung kasalanan man ay sapagkat kami ay tao lamang.

Kahit D'yos na ang siyang may utos,
Dahil sa pagsinta damdamin din ang s'yang nasusunod;
Di ba tayo ay tao lamang?
Ganyan tayong lahat, o kay saklap ng buhay.

At kung 'yan man ay kasalanan
Ay sapagkat kami ay tao lamang.

Pandangguhan
(Folk melody)

Manunugtog ay nangagpasimula
At nangagsayawan ang mga mutya,
Sa mga padyak parang magigiba
Ang bawat tapakan ng mga bakya.

Kung pagmamasdan ay nakatutuwa
Ang hinhin nila'y hindi nawawala,
Tunay na hinahangaan ng madla
Ang sayaw nitong ating Inang Bansa.

Dahil sa ikaw, mutyang paraluman,
Walag singganda sa Dagat Silangan;
Mahal na hiyas ang puso mo, hirang,
Ang pag-ibig mo'y kay hirap kamtan

Kung hindi taos ay mabibigo
Sa mga pagsuyong iniaalay.
Kung hindi taos ay mabibigo
Sa mga pagsuyong iniaalay.

Halina, aking mahal,
Ligaya ko ay ikaw,
Kapag di ka natatanaw
Ang puso ko ay namamanglaw.

Kung may pista sa aming bayan
Ang lahat ay nagdiriwang,
May litson bawat tahanan,
May gayak pati simbahan,
Paglabas ni Santa Mariang mahal
Kami ay taos na nagdarasal
Prusisyon dito ay angdaraan
Kung kaya't ang iba'y nag-aabang
May tumutugtog at sumasayaw
Mayr'ong sa galak ay napapasigaw
Ang pista sa bayan namin ay ganyan,
Ang saya'y tila walang katapusan.

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PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

Farewell to British envoy

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

IN A FAREWELL reception, British Ambassador and Madame **Allan Collins** went out of their way to show their appreciation for their friends in the diplomatic circle and the Filipino community. Ambassador Collins, who considers the Philippines his second home, says his stint as deputy head of mission in Manila from 1990 and 1993 and as Her Majesty's ambassador in 1998-2002, accounted for nearly seven years of his life.

The highlight of the reception, aside from the marvellous crepes from Inter-Con with lovely blueberry, mango or chocolate filling, and all kinds of wonderful pastas and roasts, was the performance by Repertory Philippines of excerpts from well-loved British musicales such as "Les Miserables," "Phantom of the Opera" and "Miss Saigon." **Johnny Litton** graciously emceed the presentation. Ambassador Collins' support of human rights, environmental problems and abused and underprivileged children will long be remembered. Bon voyage and Godspeed!

ARTIST Ramon Orlina

Pals of culture

CHITO Madrigal Collantes, founding chair of the Friends of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, now the Friends for Cultural Concerns of the Philippines (FCCP), hosted a splendid lunch at her residence for the newly inducted members of the board: **Chloe C. Periquet**, president; **Beth Cristobal**, first vice president; **Mellie Ablaza**, second vice president; **Karen Macasaet**, treasurer; **Tess Castro**, assistant treasurer; and **Sol Tan-Gatute**, secretary.

Despite the change of names, FCCP will maintain its objectives, with special emphasis on outreach programs starting with the concert of the Manila Symphony Orchestra II at the Pagsangjan Church. The Laguna affair will have a reception hosted by **Ernie Santiago** in honor of the intrepid Ms Collantes who helicopters to work on Ayala Avenue these days. It's the only way, really, and better than having motorcycle cops parting the traffic for you and annoying everybody else.

Welcome, Asian artists

AT ITS temporary home at the "old" Makati Stock Market Building, Ayala Museum welcomed the Filipino participants of the Federation of Asian Artists chaired by **Susan Fetalvero Roces**. Last year's Federation exhibit was held at the Guangchou's Museum of Art. The Philippines and Ayala Museum will hosts to the exhibit in 2005 at the Museum's new building. (The National Museum cannot host it. With a budget slash of 44 percent, it cannot even pay the Meralco bill.)

Patricia Zobel de Halffter cut the ribbon with Susan and Ayala Museum director **Nina Baker**. The show represented a cross-section of Filipino artists, including **Bencab** (who will open on April 16 an exhibit at the Luz Gallery), **Ramon Orlina**, **Raul Isidro**, **Gus Albor**, **Santi Bose**, **Emmanuel Garibay**, **Alfredo Liongoren**, **Jonathan Olazo** and young artist **Jose John Santos**.

AMBASSADOR Alan Collins, Madame Collins, and Marixi and Alex Prieto

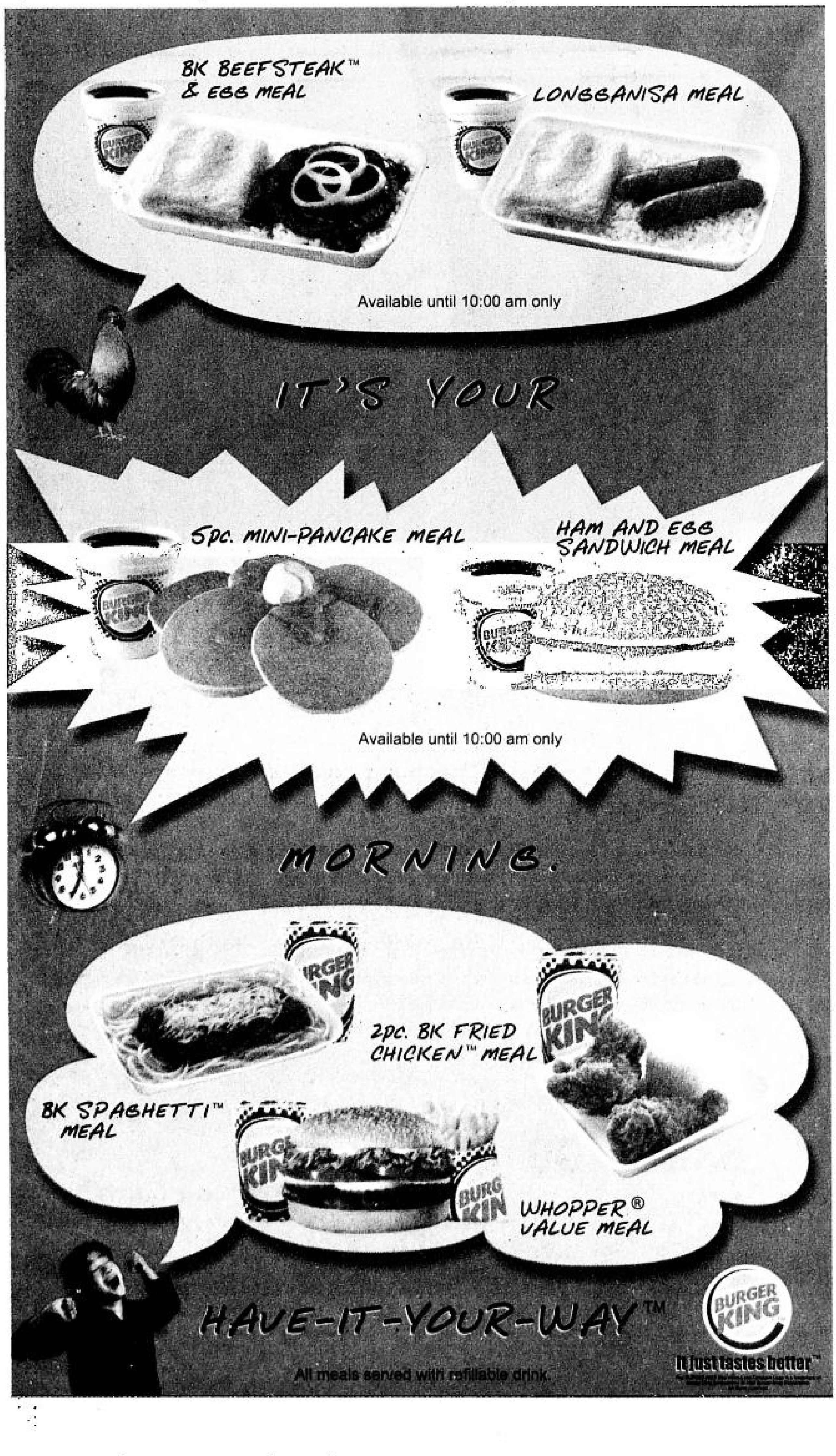
THE SYQUIA brood (lawyer Jose Luis, Jose Martin, Fr. Jose Francisco and Dr. Jose Fernando), Ambassador Enrique Syquia and Leticia Syquia pose with UST Vice Rector Fr. Juan Ponce, O.P., after receiving the Outstanding Thomasian Family Award.

True Thomasian family

ENRIQUE Syquia, Ambassador of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, his wife **Letty** and their four boys—**Jose Luis**, **Jose Martin**, **Jose Francisco** and **Jose Fernando**—accepted the Oustanding Thomasian Family Award from the University of Santo Tomas Alumni Association. The award is given to a family all of whose members studied at UST and showed exemplary accomplishments. Ambassador Syquia acquired his law degree, magna cum laude, from the Pontifical University. His children likewise graduated from UST with honors. Syquia had since served his alma mater as lawyer and faculty member. Some of his sons also lecture at UST.

AMBASSADOR Syquia delivers his acceptance speech after receiving the Outstanding Thomasian Family Award from the UST Alumni Association. His son, Dr. Jose Fernando Syquia, looks on.

SUSAN Roces, chair of the Federation of Asian Artists, Patsy Zobel and Dr. Baker



Theater arts workshop at CCP

TANGHALANG Pilipino, the resident theater country of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, will hold its theater arts workshops from April 16 to May 30.

Creative Dramatics for Children focuses on games, storytelling, music and puppetry for children aged 7-11, and for those 16 years and above.

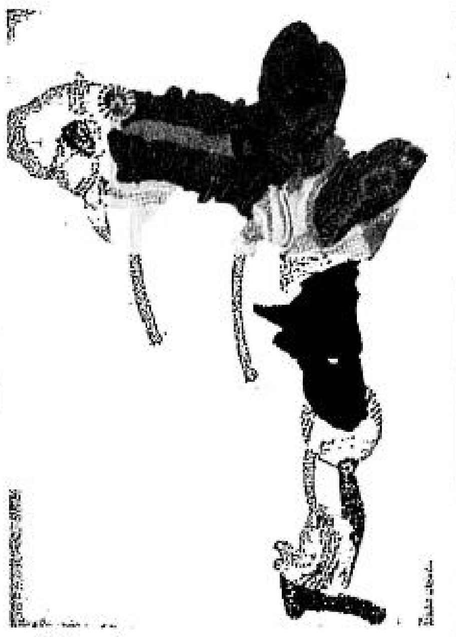
Columbia University graduate Jose Estrella will handle Fundamentals of Play Directing Part 1. Rody Vera handles Playwriting, Mila Estadilla handles Costume-making and Sherry Lana, Teen Theater.

A second term will focus on Acting in Musical Theater.

Call 832-3661 or 832-1125 local 1620.

Lopez Museum hosts kid drama workshop

THE LOPEZ Museum (G/F Benpres, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City) will host Dulaang Talyer's summer workshop, "Creative Dramatics," that focuses on basic storytelling and acting. The workshop is for children aged 7-10. Fee is P6,000 for 10 sessions. Call 635-9545.



Unique weaves at Avelana

THE IMMENSE works of Ma. Cristina Valdezco consist of rags woven into a disarming plethora of colors, textures and dimensions. A graduate of fine arts from the Technological University of the Philippines, Valdezco experiments with thread, fabric, macrame and chrochet. She is holding her first solo exhibit titled "Metaforms" at the Avellana Art Gallery (220 Fresno Road, Pasay City) until April 24. Call 522-9793 and 94 or e-mail agallery@info.com.ph.

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Books

'Beautiful Mind' lies about homosexuality

By B. Carlo M. Tadiar
Contributor

THIS year's Oscar winner for best picture hinges on a boldfaced lie. By purposefully excising the homosexuality from the life story of its protagonist, mathematical genius and Nobel Laureate John Nash, "Beautiful Mind" betrays the very point of the biopic—to find meaning in the life of an actual individual.

In her prodigiously researched biography of Nash, journalist Sylvia Nasar makes plain the romantic and sexual attraction he had for other men. It is clear to her that his desire for and involvement with other men constitute a substantial aspect of his life (and their repression a probable element in his psychosis). Though John Nash sired two sons by two different women (one out of wedlock), his relations with men (consummated or not) outweighed his heterosexual involvement in primacy. This is a far cry from the movie which has the temerity to conjure a moment of epiphany leading to Nash's breakthrough work in game theory as having risen out of barroom strategies for scoring with a bunch of women, notably what is supposed to be the paragon object of desire, the blonde (girl,

BEAUTIFUL/ p.F3

RUSSELL Crowe portrays the mathematician John Nash, whose homosexual adventures are discussed in the book on which the movie is based.

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Disquieting disquisition on mortality and love

The Sorrows of Water
By J. Neil Carmelo Garcia
University of the Philippines Press and UP Creative Writing Center, 2000
204 pages

By Constantino C. Tejero

REVIEW

AFTER YEARS of soul-searching, J. Neil Carmelo Garcia has come up with a book of 66 poems, "The Sorrows of Water." This is his third poetry collection, after "Closet Quivers" in 1992 and "Our Lady of the Carnival" in 1996.

It is a book of magical transformations, exploring the permutations of feelings and the changeability of form, the flux of time, the transitoriness of life, the impermanence of things, and the immutability of love. It almost reads like an updated version of Ovid's "Metamorphoses."

Because Garcia has found his personae in classical mythology, particularly in tragic lovers such as Echo and Narcissus, Cupid and Psyche, Hero and Leander, Orpheus and Eurydice, Apollo and Daphne, Apollo and Hyacinthus, but also in solitary souls such as Clytie, Persephone, Icarus, Penelope, Calypso, the undine. From Philippine mythology, he speaks through Mebuyan, Melu, Alunsina.

These are the masks through which the poet sublimates or reenacts the various painful situations he has gone through life. Through them he recreates or reinvents his existence. At the center is the immemorial question: What is the soul?

The soul, says the poet, is what the body is. Because the body as vessel is actually the form of the soul.

This is elementary catechism, because, really, every Christian child knows that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Only, the poet gives it felicitous utterance, as in these lines from "Psyche": "...the love of body/is the love of form./Body—/the luminous edge/where the soul/can begin."

Murderous love

Garcia's idea of love is murderous: The person we love, we kill. Because, for love to last, the beloved must be frozen in time by the lover. Because any lover would not want the beloved to change, or go away.

Again, this is basic Edgar Allan Poe. Any common reader can see how that man could not look at a beautiful woman without having to suppress the impulse to turn her into a statuary.

But Garcia does not have to commit a crime of passion or resort to murder, as he has found a weapon in the potency of language. In "Monster," the lover captures the beloved in a fixed moment in time: "In our poems,/those airless tombs of words,/they do not need/to change..."

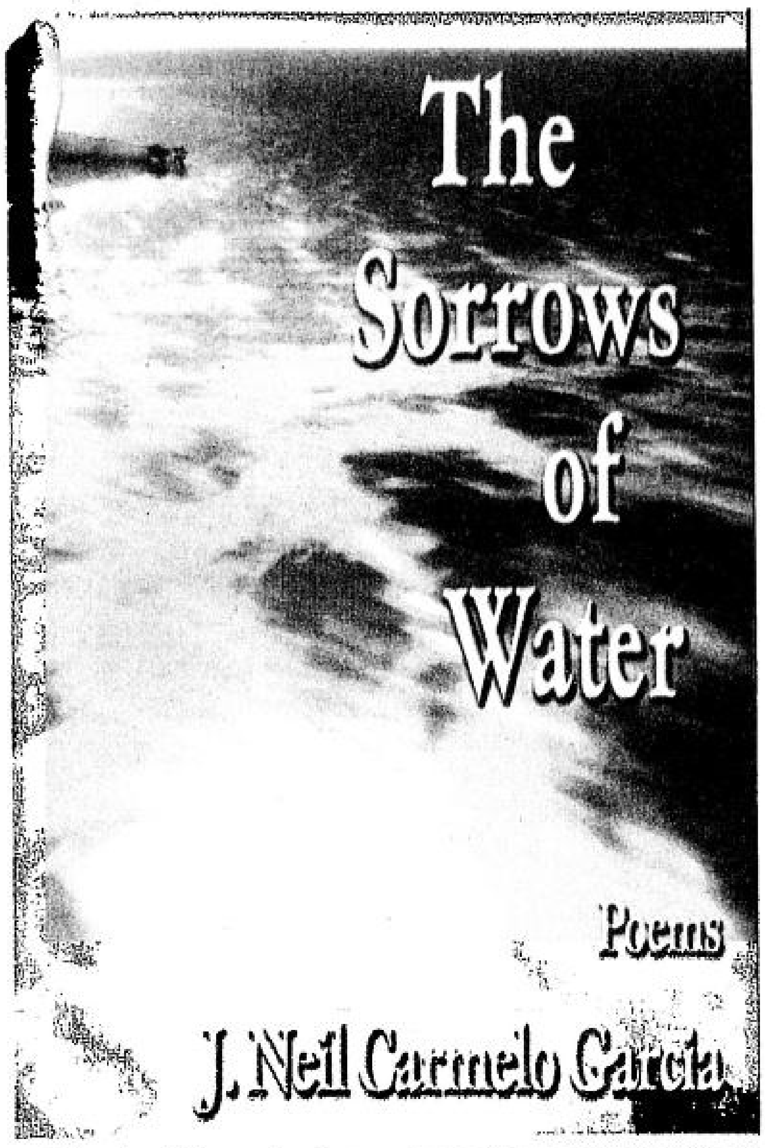
Then, in chilling lines, he elucidates: "Thus:/whomever we desire,/inside our poems' grip—/can never live. Helplessly,/it is our fabled right,/a monster's fate to spell:/his eyes—/and they turn marble-blind,/his hands—/and they hang fixed in air,/his heart—/and it is stone."

In several poem cycles, Garcia explores love's possibilities and impossibilities, reflecting on every nuance of passion, desire, his analogue for life.

"Gift," 1-7, deal with rejection, abandonment, longing, absence and loss. This is a series of beautiful lyric poems, full of passionate thoughts and profound emotions wrought by ineffable words.

Solitary friendship

"Garden of Wordlessness," 1-4, would seem to be about platonic love, particularly the solitary friendship of outsiders, yet they also touch on some feeling that's unspeakable or left unspoken.



In "Avowals," 1-2, is love lost and found, which reaches fever pitch as the lover hoards every bit of the beloved ("to hold you in all your little bits,/to adore you utterly *through* them"). The first poem is particularly terrifying.

Here is love that kills and suffocates, and love that enriches and liberates. And here also are love's hurts and betrayals, immortal longings, and plain animal lust. Most often, these are sad pieces, of loveless gestures, futile pleasures, perplexing pain and murderous intents. The tone is somber throughout, funereal even.

It is not all pining away of lovers, however, but also physical abuse, violence and violation, often approaching desecration.

In "Learning to Swim," a 7-year-old boy is thrown by his father into the fatal water (which in adulthood has become his life-giving element). The violation of a frail sensitive soul is justified as a rite of passage.

In "First Time," the poet's persona claims he experienced his first erection when he was 7, while in bed lying close to his half-naked father, in an explosive reversal of the Oedipus complex. (It's the Electra complex, they call it, but this is a boy, for God's sake.)

Hunger of lovers

In "Pardon," the violation comes close to sacrilege, when the boy is violated by an uncle in front of the life-size icon of Our Lord of Pardon. At so tender an age, he bears both physical pain and mental anguish in silence, as though in sacrifice to the Lord of a Hundred Wounds.

In "Boy," the 8-year-old is violated by a teenage cousin, but now he seems to like it, resigned to his destiny.

One wonders if these instances of dysfunction in childhood may have some bearing in the heartbreaks that come later in adulthood.

In "Primal," the boy peeps through a hole and watches his parents make love in the next room. In adulthood, he reenacts that scene with a stranger in a motel room, this time in an act of lovelessness, though still with the hunger of lovers.

The breaking of taboos is a subtheme running through this collection. The incest motif appears early in the book, specifically in the fourth poem, the sad "Legend of the Sea Cow."

The violation of the spirit, however, is tempered by the fineness of the poet's language. Garcia utilizes both short and long lines, and comes up with a fluid and exquisite language. He has assimilated a range of influences from Wallace Stevens to Mark Doty, and is effortless with either the Homeric metaphor or straight narrative.

There are some instances where technique fails him. One or two poems are so pared down, stripped of poetic elements, that the language sounds prosaic. There are a few awkward turns of phrase, juvenile effusions, then the occasional poeticism, or the so-called purple patches.

On the whole, this collection is more mature in form and ideas than the previous ones. It has depth of insight and profundity of feeling, and, by Garcia's appropriation of the myths, his voice finds universal resonance.

UST Theology Week to discuss faith, violence and values

TO PROVIDE a venue for the open discussion of issues affecting contemporary Philippine society, the Faculty of Theology of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) will hold the annual Theology Week starting today until April 13 at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex (TARC) Auditorium.

Theo Week 2002 will tackle "Faith, Violence and Values." According to the organizers, the forum will attempt to look at the religious roots of violence and values.

Speakers include Bishops Luis Antonio Tagle and Julito Cortez, Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo, Margarita de los Reyes-Cojuangco, Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI, Fr. Franz Josef Eilers, SVD, Dr. Ustadz Wadja Esmila, Fr. Geraldo Tapiador, Sr. Lilian Curaming, Dr. Severina Villegas, Anita Meily, Dr. Florentino Hornedo, Fr. Fausto Gomez, O.P., Fr. Jose Antonio Aureada, O.P., Fr. Angel Aparicio, O.P., Fr. Isidro Abano, O.P., and many other Dominican theologians.

Theo Week 2002 is organized by the University's Graduate School, Institute of Religion and Social Research Center, and the Dominican Province of the Philippines' Commission on Higher Theological Reflection.

The affair is open to all religion teachers, theology professors, seminarians, priests, religious brothers and sisters, and lay men and women who would like to deepen their faith in the context of society's current situation.

Call the UST Faculty of Theology (Office of the Dean) at 731-4066, 731-3125 local 308 or 740-9723 local 8261, or e-mail ecclesia@ust.edu.ph.

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Book on early Church women

A COMMON sentiment among women who read the Bible is that it contains few stories about women. For the past several years, a Filipino nun has been exploring and researching the few stories of women that appear in the Bible, and writing books about them.

Sr. Judette A. Gallares of the Religious of the Cenacle has just launched "Fire Within," her third book about women in Scriptures. This time she explores the stories of four women in the early church: Tabitha (Dorcas), Lydia and Priscilla from the Acts of the Apostles, and Phoebe from the Epistle to the Romans.

Sister Judette's earlier titles are "Images of Faith: Spirituality of Women in the Old Testament" and "Images of Courage: Spirituality of Women in the Gospels from a Third World and an Asian Perspective."

"Fire Within" highlights the spirituality of the four women and discusses their experiences and missionary activities. Sister Judette draws a disturbing parallelism between these biblical women and Third-World women today, citing similarities in their experiences of discrimination, prejudice, injustice and oppression.

Each chapter of the book includes suggestions for prayer and reflection and Christian action.

Sister Judette did her doctoral studies in biblical theology and ministry at the University of Oxford.

"Fire Within" is jointly published by the Institute for Consecrated Life in Asia and the Religious of the Cenacle.

'Beautiful Mind' lies about homosexuality

> The Oscar best picture leaves out the biography's more controversial parts. By failing to flesh out a more complex picture of a highly complex man, the movie fails the very point of its being mad

From page F1

needless to say). Nothing could be farther from the truth.

In Nasar's account, Nash's first expression of sexuality is queer. Exploring a maze of tunnels under their college, Nash remarks to his boy companions, "Gee, if we got trapped down here, we'd have to turn homo." One of the companions, Paul Zweifel, 15 at the time, "found the remark pretty odd. But during Thanksgiving break, in the deserted dormitory, Nash climbed into Zweifel's bed... and made a pass at him." Nash was 19.

"Away from home, living in close proximity with other adolescents, Nash discovered that he was attracted to other boys. He spoke and acted in ways that seemed natural to him, only to be exposed to his peers' contempt. Zweifel and other boys in the dormitory started calling Nash 'Homo' and 'Nash-mo'... No doubt he found the label hurtful and humiliating, but his anger is all that anyone witnessed... The boys made him the butt of various pranks," writes Nasar.

Thwarted desire

Throughout most of his life, Nash would have to contend with thwarted desire—except in the case of women. Though his pictures in the book give little evidence of it, Nash was regarded as terrifically handsome, like a Hollywood idol, "a god."

In graduate school at Princeton, he continued to manifest his attraction to men, despite the censure it elicited. "One of the students he sought out was John Milnor, the first of a number of brilliant younger mathematicians to whom Nash was drawn. Tall, lithe, with a baby face and the body of a gymnast, Milnor was only a freshman but he was already the department's golden boy," writes Nasar.

In the summer of 1952, Nash embarked on a road trip from his hometown in Virginia to Santa Monica in California, to Rand, the Cold War think tank, alluded to cryptically in the movie. Rand had engaged Nash's services, along with other scientific stars of the era, as part of its efforts to keep the upper hand in the conflict with the Eastern bloc. For this road trip, Nash engaged the company of Milnor, his sister and one Ruth Hincks, a fellow academic, in what would have looked like a double date, but Nash's interest was not in Ruth but in Milnor. In Santa Monica, Milnor would help Nash with experiments toward groundbreaking work, but felt he had to fend off Nash. "I was very naive and very homophobic," Milnor tells Nasar. "It wasn't the kind of thing people talked about then." Nasar interjects, "But what Nash felt toward Milnor was something close to love. A dozen years later, in a letter to Milnor, Nash wrote: 'Concerning love, I know a conjugation: amo, amas, amat, amatis, amant. Perhaps amas is also the imperative, love! Perhaps one must be very masculine to use the imperative.'"

THE REAL John Nash: Did his homosexuality cause his mental illness?

Typical Nash

Nasar characterizes this situation of unrequited love on the part of Nash as typical of him. Donald Newman, a mathematician who knew Nash in the '50s at MIT, told Nasar, "Nash was always forming intense friendships with men that had a romantic quality." Newman had "firsthand knowledge," reports Nasar, "because Nash was, for a time, infatuated with him—with predictable results. 'He used to talk about how Donald looked all the time,' Mrs. Newman said in 1996. Newman recalled: 'He tried fiddling around with me. I was driving my car when he came on to me.' DJ and Nash were cruising around in Newman's white Thunderbird when Nash kissed him on the mouth. DJ just laughed it off."

"Nash's first experience of mutual attraction," reports Nasar, "occurred in Santa Monica." It was with a man, a fellow scientist, about the same age as Nash. "The encounter must have been very fleeting..." continues Nasar. "But it was nonetheless decisive because for the first time he found not rejection but reciprocity. Thus it was the first step out of his extreme emotional isolation and the world of relationships that were purely imaginary, a first taste of intimacy, not entirely happy, no doubt, but suggestive of hitherto unsuspected satisfactions."

Ironically, the first run-in Nash had with juridical authority, which in the movie takes the form a hyper-dramatic but delusional abduction, car chase and firefight, was actually for cruising a gay-bait, a policeman, in a beachside public restroom in Santa Monica, a well-known gay pickup area at the time. Nash was charged with indecent exposure, and was stripped of his security clearance at the prestigious Rand.

Though Nash denied he was homosexual to the authorities at Rand, he already cut the figure of one among his colleagues at MIT. Nash had a relationship with one Jack Bricker, a fellow mathematician, which the rest of the community could not but conclude was romantic. "'They were importantly interested in each other,' Donald Newman said; they made no secret of their affection, kissing in front of other people."

Nash's homosexuality troubled him in his mental illness, transforming into a hub of guilt around which paranoia swirled.

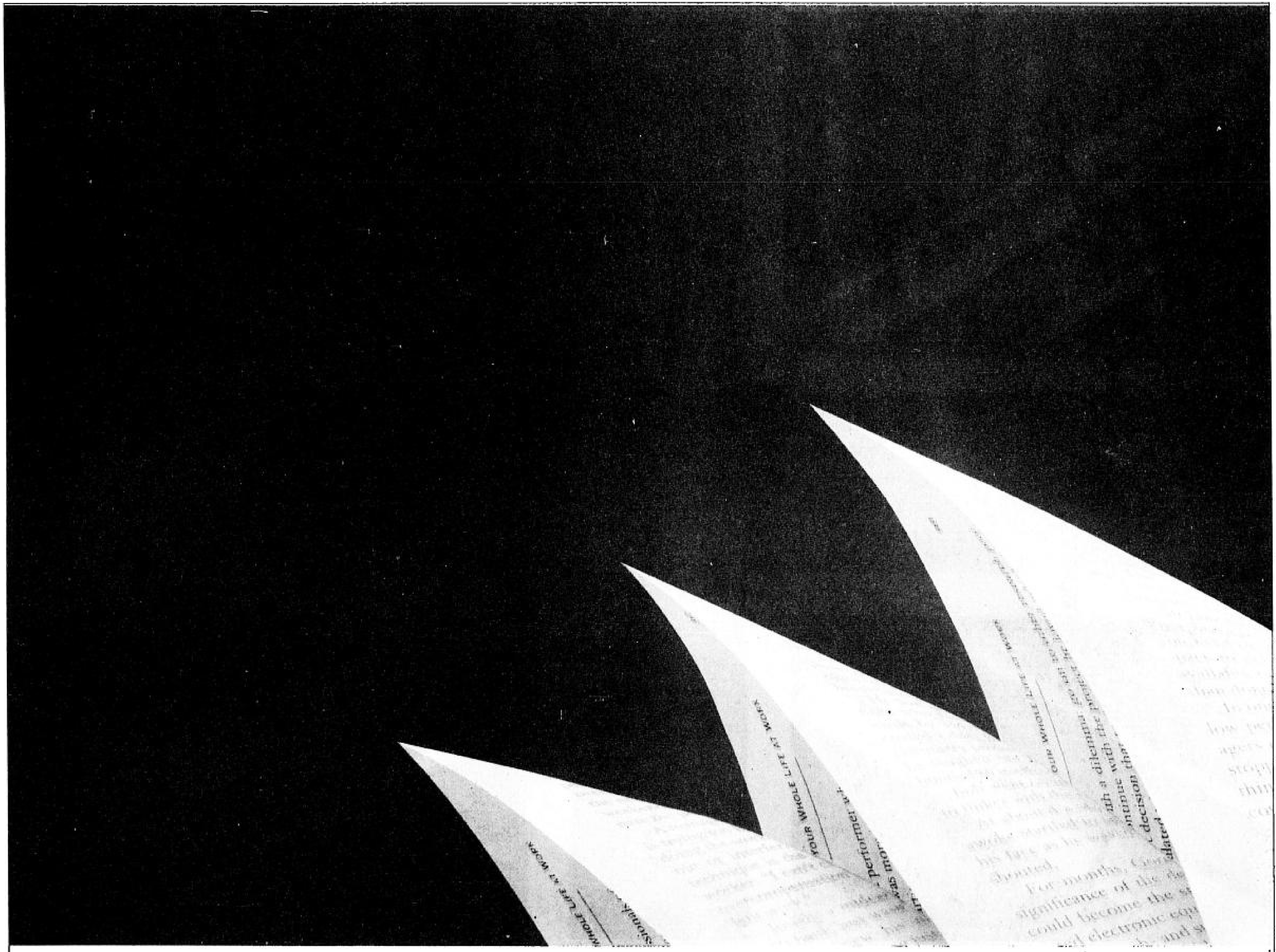
Ambivalence

The movie at least concedes that it was Alicia, Nash's wife, who pursued him. Nasar states that Nash felt a deep ambivalence toward his wife, and that a primary motive of his in marrying her was the status the convention afforded, which was so desperately wanted by an eccentric like Nash, and added so much more to his glamour as a mathematical genius at the start of his career. Nash's relationship to the woman who sired his first son, out of wedlock (before he married Alicia), was abusive, and lastingly hurtful to both mother and son.

The movie hides the fact that Alicia sued for and was granted a divorce from Nash in 1963, no longer able to bear the strain of Nash going berserk on both sides of the Atlantic. (He sought to reject his American citizenship in embassies all over Europe.) They did return under the same roof after a long period, when Alicia, taking pity on the phantom that Nash had become around Princeton campus, took him into her house.

The travesty the movie makes of Nash's—and also Alicia's—actual lives lies in its wringing it into a simplistic fantasy of hetero-patriarchal romance triumphing over all, providing the solitary key to existential meaningfulness and psychic wholeness. Jennifer Connelly's Alicia "wind-beneath-my-wings" Nash shedding tears as Russell Crow's John Nash delivers his "Only You" Nobel Prize acceptance speech is a painfully trite moment.

The film critic Pauline Kael dismissed the filmmaker's obligation to stick to literal truth in the depiction of historical figures. The filmmaker's obligation is in encapsulating a meaningfulness in the life of its subject for the filmmaker's own time. In our era, Hollywood has taken a dramatic interest in homosexual characters. But apparently the interest stops when the homosexuality falls short of being the single defining trait of the character. By failing to flesh out a more complex picture of a highly complex man—a man whose life story is so intensely reflective of the 20th century—and especially, by shushing what our era has brought to candor, the movie "A Beautiful Mind" fails the very point of its being made.



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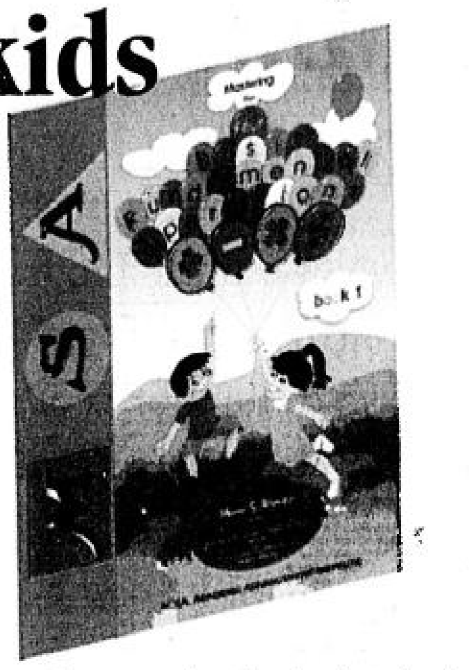
New activity books for kids are great learning aids



By Cecile G. Garcia
Contributor

REVIEW

MSA Academic Advancement Institute has met some success in its series of re view books. Its new series of text cum activity books for beginners seems promising. The series tries to make learning attractive, easy and fun for the child.

"Reading Basic Sight Words" by Amacha Feliciano, an English instructor at MSA, is an activity book for preschoolers. Using large bold prints for better comprehension, the book classifies words according to color, temperature, action and number, among others. Words are accompanied by illustrations, which make their meaning graphic and concrete. In turn the illustrations make the subject matter more attractive and appealing to the child.

The book's purpose is to enrich the child's vocabulary through picture-word association.

MSA
My Super Adventures
A B C in 1 2 3
LEARNING

Numbers, not words, are the major feature of "Mastering the Four Basic Fundamental Operations; Books 1, 2 & 3." This is a set of math books for kinder up to grades 1 and 2, levels for which author Merle S. Alferes, a Math teacher, has put together numerous simple exercises in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Book 1 is made up purely of exercises, while books 2 and 3 for more advanced students feature some problem-solving.

The books' simplicity and the author's clever use of repetition ensure "gradual reinforcement," which makes it possible for the child not only to conquer the fear of math, but to master it as well.

"My Super Adventures in Writing" by Feliciano and Alferes, as the title suggests, makes learning how to write an exciting adventure for the child. Designed for kindergarten students, it is filled with interesting instructional activities that hope to guide the child through every stage of the writing process—from mastering the basic strokes to learning how to write the alphabet, writing words and phrases, and writing sentences.

Every activity in the book is geared toward developing the child's hand and eye coordination while enhancing and encouraging his creativity.

"My Super Adventures in Learning," also by Feliciano and Alferes, is for preschoolers in the nursery level.

Described by the authors as an "all-in-one basic text," the book carries stimulating exercises for the development of basic skills in the three R's: reading, writing and arithmetic. It consists of five parts.

The first part, prewriting, highlights exercises for basic writing. The second, precounting, introduces the child to numbers, while the third, counting, teaches him how to write correct numerals and number words even as he starts learning how to count.

The fourth, prereading, brings the child in touch with the basic skills necessary for learning how to read, and the fifth, picture alphabet, acquaints him with the English alphabet.

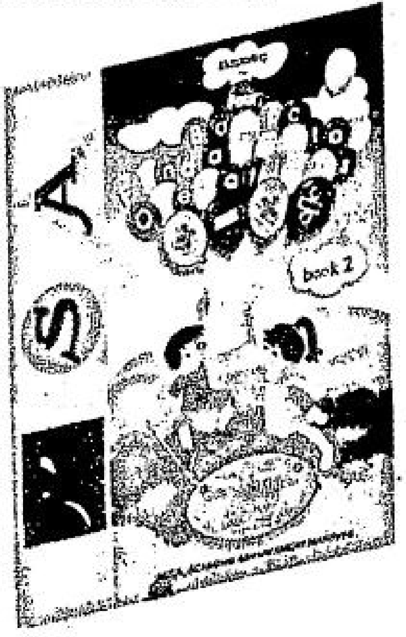
All activities in the book are designed to develop independence in the child. Simple with easy-to-follow instructions, they can be accomplished with little supervision. What's more, the child will surely find them challenging and fun. The book comes with a separate workbook.

Feliciano and Alferes' "My Super Adventures in Reading" allows preschoolers to explore the wonderful world of reading. According to the tandem, the book aims to develop in the child the ability to manage sounds and symbols and the "considerable range of habitual responses to a specific set of patterns of graphic shapes."

The book provides varied activities such as identifying beginning and final sounds and identifying appropriate blends; reading simple sentences; reading simple sentences with phonic elements; and reading words at a level above what the child can read independently. It also has activities that can help the child develop multiple intelligence.

Unlike the others in the series, "Preparing for Preschool (Entrance Test)," was conceived with both child and parent in mind. A collaborative effort of the MSA staff, its purpose is to prepare the child for higher learning—that is, preschool. It also aims to give parents an idea of what the child will find in preschool, making them better equipped to handle whatever problems the child may encounter.

"Preparing for Preschool" is divided into five parts: reading, language, math, science and perceiving relationships. Each "subject area" is made up of exercises geared to test the child's knowledge of a specific topic.



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To register, visit the customer service desk of any National Bookstore branch in Metro Manila. There will only be 20 students per class and registration is on a first come, first served basis, so register as early as possible. Special discounts will be given to early registrants and Book Circle members. Registration is ongoing until today.

Together with its partners in reading, namely Simon & Schuster, HarperCollins, Random House, Lampara Books, Adams House, Li'l Hands, Crayola and Mongol, National Bookstore aims to offer the best possible summer reading adventure kids will surely remember.

15 fellows to 3rd UST National Writers Workshop named

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies (UST-CCWS) has named 15 fellows to the 3rd UST National Writers Workshop on April 21-27 in Baguio City.

The fellows for fiction in English are Mary Anne Moll (Ateneo de Naga), Francezca Theresa Kwe (UST) and Pocholo Martin Goitia (UST). The fellows for fiction in Filipino are Melissa Rellosa (AdMU) and Eunice Barbara Novio (Occidental Mindoro National College).

The fellows for poetry in English are Jeanie Nieva (AdMU), Anjeline de Dios (AdMU), Shiela Molarto (UST), Jay Malaga (Colegio de San Agustin-Bacolod), Alexander Agena (UP) and Frederick Dimson (UST). The fellows for poetry in Filipino are Randell Suba (UST), Jose Jason Chancoco (FEU), Jan Mikael Co (AdMU) and Leonardo Balmaceda (AdMU).

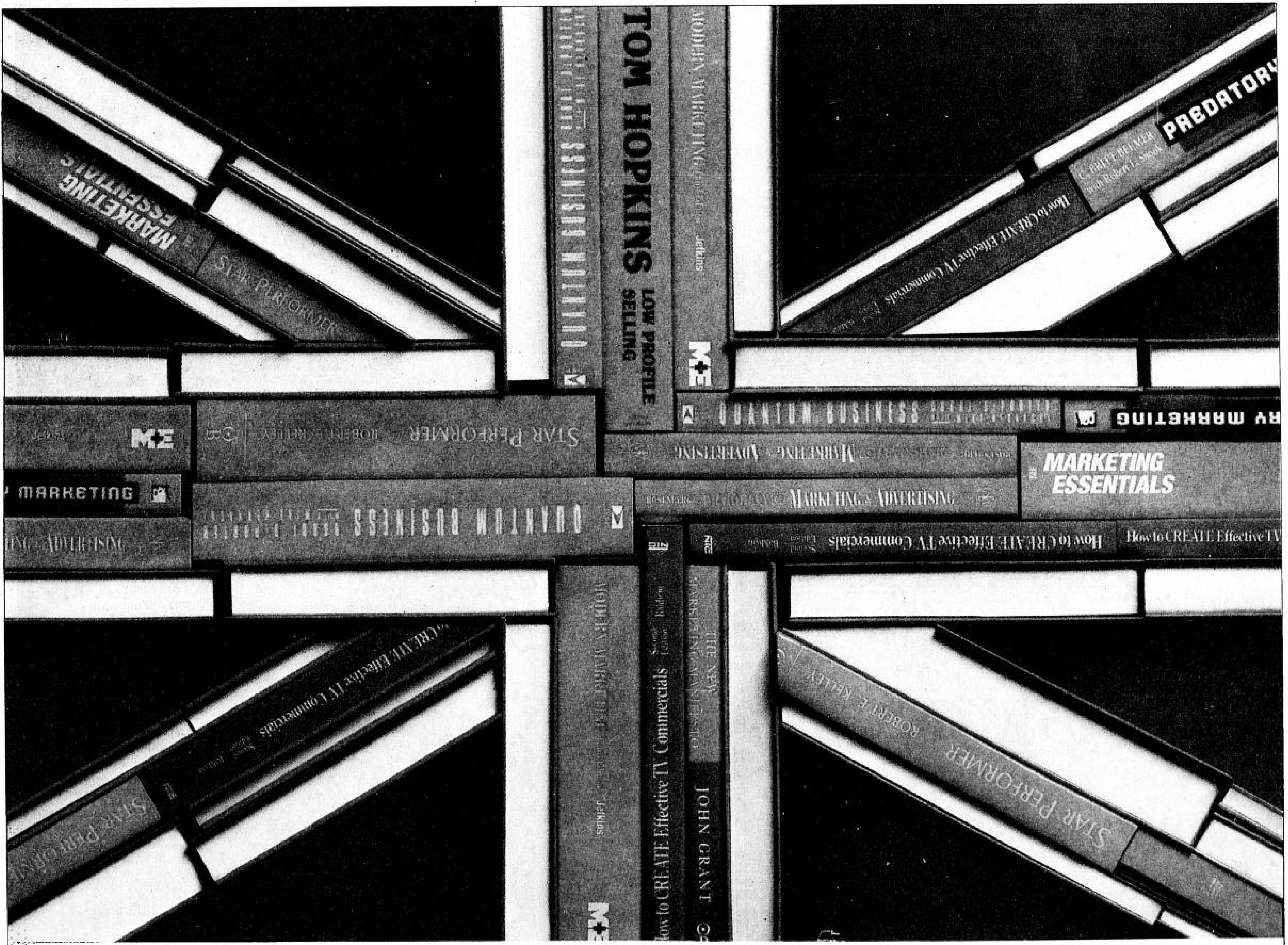
Fellows are requested to get in touch with the UST-CCWS (St. Raymund's Building, UST campus, España, Manila; tel. 731-3101 local 8281) not later than April 15. Failure to do so would mean a waiver of the fellowship, which would then be awarded to another deserving applicant.

Non-Manila fellows will be provided transportation fare. All fellows will be provided board, lodging and allowance. Workshop directors are Dr. Ophelia Dimalanta and Dr. Cirilo Bautista.

Food authors make April delicious

NATIONAL Bookstore whets the appetite of readers as it features "The Filipino Kitchen Library" series, a collection of Filipino dishes, with five books available. Combining the talents and culinary expertise of Alieen Jaraza, Hector Jaraza and Christina Aquino, the books are especially designed for people who wish to prepare distinctly Filipino food.

The books, "Salads and Vegetables," "Deserts and Snacks," "Great Value Meals," "Asian Cooking" and "Great Celebrations" feature recipes that are kitchen-tested, with ingredients readily available in the market. They also include a helpful section on cooking and buying tips.



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